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Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

**“The use of Authentic Material to develop reading skills in English
language learners in the tenth grade at Ángel Modesto Paredes High
School”**

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RESUMEN

Esta investigación se basó en el estudio de "Recursos de Aprendizaje Auténticos," enfocados en el desarrollo de las habilidades de lectura, dirigidos a estudiantes en el décimo grado en el colegio "Ángel Modesto Paredes." El objetivo era motivar a los profesores y estudiantes a utilizar textos auténticos a fin de mejorar las habilidades de lectura mediante la creación de un folleto con actividades y planes de clase que se pudieran utilizar en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera. Este proyecto utiliza un enfoque combinado (métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos); por otra parte, el proyecto encaja en las categorías de no experimental, correlacional, transversal, descriptivo y de campo. Después de culminada la investigación, se concluyó que los estudiantes presentan problemas no lingüísticos y lingüísticos cuando se refiere a la lectura en Inglés; por lo tanto, los recursos de aprendizaje auténticos se podrían utilizar para hacer frente a esos problemas, ya que no se utilizan comúnmente como material didáctico en esta institución en particular; de este modo se creó el folleto.

PALABRAS CLAVE: auténtico, materiales, lectura, habilidades, EFL, folleto.



ABSTRACT

This research was based on the study of "Authentic Learning Resources," focused on the development of reading skills, aimed at students in the tenth grade at "Ángel Modesto Paredes" High School. The objective was to motivate teachers and students to use authentic texts in order to improve reading skills by creating a booklet with activities and lesson plans that could be used in EFL classes. This project used a mix method approach (quantitative & qualitative methods); moreover, the project fits in the categories of nonexperimental, correlational, transversal, descriptive, and of field. After conducting the research, it was concluded that students presented non-linguistic and linguistic issues when referring to reading in English; therefore, authentic learning resources could be used to face those problems since they were not used commonly as didactic materials at this particular institution; thus the booklet was created.

KEY WORDS: authentic, materials, reading, skills, EFL, booklet.



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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Rosario and Benjamin, who have helped me to accomplish many goals in my lifetime. Their unconditional support has given me the strength to go forward and achieve my dreams. A special thanks to my sister, Marcia, who has been there for me whenever I needed her help. This work is for you dear sister. Finally, thanks to the rest of my brothers and sisters; I really appreciate your support.



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INTRODUCTION

Teaching resources have been developed in order to facilitate the teaching-learning process. These materials create a bridge between teachers and students, where both sides share their knowledge. English course books, among other graded materials, are used commonly in EFL classes to accomplish this goal; however, it is widely accepted that students may have problems when using the language in real-life circumstances. Graded materials teach scenarios where students know what to do, but outside the classroom, things do not follow a script. Authentic resources can be the answer to the problem by letting students to see how the language is used for real purposes.

Authentic materials are basically resources created for native speakers to communicate something to other native speakers. English teachers take those resources and bring them into the classroom which, according to many researches, have positive effects in the process of learning a new language; however, they are not used widely in EFL classes. This work pretends to motivate students and teachers to use authentic materials by providing them a booklet based on authentic resources to improve reading skills.

Reading is a basic skill needed in daily life. Reading is not just decoding text; it goes beyond. Good readers comprehend a text by using a series of skills. Those skills can be developed at school by placing a series of reading exercises: however, students may find boring traditional texts; thus, authentic material may be the way to motivate students to get interested in reading. The combination of authentic materials and reading skills may lead to positive results when learning a new language.



The present work is divided in five chapters: The first chapter explains the purpose, the problem, and the justification of this work; moreover, the research questions and objectives are included in this section.

Chapter two contains the literature review. Books, journals, and researches related to this project in order to provide information about the authentic text in EFL classes to develop reading skills.

Chapter three presents the methodology used in this research; thus, the reader will find in this section the type of research, the instruments for data collection, the sample and population as well as how the data were analyzed.

Chapter four describes the results. Data collected is presented in charts and graphics in order to help readers to understand the frequency and fluctuation of data which were extracted from the instruments used during the research.

Chapter five contains the conclusions and recommendations. The data analyzed found non-linguistic and linguistic issues in terms of reading text; thus, the need to use new ways of practicing reading skills should be considered when planning classes. Authentic materials are highly recommended in this work as an alternative for traditional text.

Finally, the booklet is presented as the outcome of this research. The booklet is planned to be used as complementary material when developing reading skills. The booklet is colorful, with interesting texts and activities; moreover; teacher's section includes the answers and lesson plans for each unit, needed to manage this material. Hopefully, this research and booklet may motivate teachers to use this kind of material in daily classes.



CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

1.1 Purpose

This research has been thought in order to help teachers and students by creating new didactic material. The research will try to come up with a booklet to develop reading skills in English language learners in tenth grade at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” high school by using authentic texts and activities, as well as it will include lesson plans based on the Communicative Language Teaching approach. This booklet will be divided in two sections: the first one will contain the materials and activities that students will have to use and perform, and the second one will contain the lesson plans that teachers may use in order to apply this proposal. Furthermore, this proposal will be integrated with the units of the course book used in public education in Ecuador to teach English; therefore, it will be easy to combine the course book and this proposal, letting teachers reinforce and extend contents shown in the base course book. Thus, this booklet will not only be useful for teachers that work at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” High School; this project may be used in all Ecuadorian public high schools, taking into account that they all have to use the same syllabus and English course book.

1.2 Problem

Authentic materials in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classes are not used frequently to improve reading skills, reducing the effectiveness of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. The lack of using authentic materials in EFL classes to improve reading skills can affect linguistically and



non-linguistically. In terms of language, not using authentic materials in EFL classes reduces the opportunities to understand basic and advanced grammatical structures, as well as syntactical compositions, and how they can be used in real texts whenever trying to communicate something. Similarly, it affects the acquisition of vocabulary, the understanding of expressions and functions of language. In non-linguistic terms, the lack of using authentic materials affects students' motivation and interest in learning English because they do not find the objective of learning it, and how it would help them in their future. Moreover, students would face problems and limitations whenever using English language in 'real situations.'

The lack of using authentic materials in EFL classes can happen due to several situations like: misunderstanding of the definition of authentic materials, the lack of knowledge about the implications of using the Communicative Language teaching approach, the fear of using authentic materials because of their implications in terms of selecting, planning, and timing consumption, and the understanding of cultural issues.

1.3 Justification

This research is **important** because it aims to promote the use of authentic materials to improve students' reading skills. Students, most of the time, have problems whenever using L2 in real situations, which in many cases is due to the didactic materials used by English teachers in their classes. Using authentic materials in EFL classes allows students to be in touch with real language; giving them the chance to set comfortable communication acts with others. Moreover, this work will serve as a reference for various educational



institutions that are looking for new ways to improve English language acquisition in students. This leads to a better future that seeks to move beyond traditional education, and aims at applying new trends: allowing an integrated education, forging creative and critical thinking in students' minds.

This project is of **interest** to EFL teachers who are looking for new ways to improve students' English language skills since this project will inquire in teaching-learning processes of the English language, and will display new techniques to foster reading skills. These will improve the students' performance and motivation in the acquisition of the English language, and thus improving the quality of education at "Ángel Modesto Paredes" High School.

This project is **feasible** because it has the support of the institution and the entire educational community; moreover, it has the human, financial and bibliographic resources that will allow to substantiate scientifically this investigation.

This project is **useful** because it will use data sources: primary and secondary, valid and reliable, allowing to develop a booklet with activities based on authentic materials to improve students' reading skills.

It is **original** because no one has conducted an investigation about the use of authentic materials to improve reading skills in this particular educational institution.

The **beneficiaries** of this work are: students, teachers, school officials, parents and the community in general.

This work will contribute to the **mission** and **vision** of the institution because students will be able to analyze real situations that are happening in



today's world. Moreover, students will be able to express their views in a critical and eloquent manner, contributing to the development of the community.

1.4 Research Question

To what extent does the use of authentic materials improve reading skills in EFL learners in tenth grade at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” High School?

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective:

To create a booklet with lesson plans and activities based on authentic materials to foster reading skills in English language learners.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives:

a) To analyze students' attitude towards reading in English in the tenth grade at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” High School.

b) To discover the incidence of authentic printed materials in EFL classes to develop reading skills in the tenth grade at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” High School.

c) To analyze students' basic reading skills as well as reading comprehension skills in English language learners in the tenth grade at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” High School.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The origin of using authentic materials in EFL classes

The use of authentic materials as language input may be considered a new tendency; however, using authentic materials in EFL classes is not new, and it has a long history (Bahrani and Shu 68). According to Gilmore, Henry Sweet was one of the first teachers to implement authentic texts in his classes because he realized the potential benefits of using these kind of materials with his students (cited in Hamed and Hilal 249). Authentic materials as language input were used for the first time in the 70s, as a result of the spread of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT) (Hamed and Hilal 249). Similarly, Little and Singleton say that the use of authentic materials in EFL classes has increased since the development of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT), indeed, this method is associated with authentic texts, allowing students to be in touch with 'real language' (1).

Teachers have observed CLT as an excellent approach whenever teaching a foreign language (Huang, Tindall, and Nisbet 2). In CLT, "language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes" (Brown 241). Huang et al. say that authentic materials can prepare EFL students to deal with "real-world" communication whenever it happens inside and outside the classroom; therefore, CLT should contain authentic materials and activities (2). However, Kumaravadivelu claims that teachers, who use the CLT, do not create real opportunities to use 'real-world-interactional' language (113). Thus, Nunan



observed EFL classes based on the CLT and found that they were not communicative (144).

Larsen-Freeman points out that one of the basic characteristic of CLT is the use of authentic materials in the teaching learning process of EFL students. Also he states that the CLT approach has changed how English language is viewed. English language is not just another subject in school; thus, English language must be seen as a very important tool of communication to interact with people inside and outside the classroom (129). CLT has as its main goal to build up students' language competence in order to help them to deal with 'real-life' communication. Teachers try to use this method correctly; however, it has been seen that they do not set real-language-based activities in EFL classes; consequently, teachers have not recognized the real potential of using authentic materials in their classes due to the misunderstanding of this term (Guo 197).

2.2 Definition of authentic materials

The term "Authentic Materials" has several definitions which are slightly different among EFL researchers. Nunan considers authentic materials as spoken or written language data which have not been produced for EFL teaching purposes (cited in Rodngam 6). Similarly, Jordan contemplates authentic materials as language issues created for any purpose other than language teaching (cited in Vahid et al. 4). Martinez and Peacock claim that authentic materials are "[m]aterials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community" (Martinez 1). It means that authentic materials are spoken or written language produced by a native speaker for a 'real audience' to communicate something (Morrow, cited in Erkaya 3). This is



emphasized by Harmer's authentic material definition when he says that authentic materials are designed for native speakers and those do not contemplate EFL classes. These kinds of materials aim at native speakers, exclusively (cited in Tamo 74). Roger and Medley also have a similar conception about authentic materials, as Harmer's definition; however, they go a little farther when they say that authentic materials are language representations of issues related to cultural and situational context (cited in Vahid 4).

Widdowson points out that "authentic" are the materials designed for native English speakers, but used inside the classrooms in the same way they were created for (cited in Hamed 249). Similarly, Jacobson et al. say that authentic materials should be used in classrooms in the same way they would be used in real life (1). When authentic materials are introduced inside EFL classes, students are involved into a new paradigm that tries to imitate real world situations (Herod, cited in Hamed 250). Therefore, according to Herrington and Oliver, authentic material introduces 'authentic learning' into EFL classes, helping students to relate contents with their 'real life' and to be prepared to face and deal with those situations (cited in Hamed 250).

According to Roger, the introduction of authentic materials in EFL classes is appropriate because they can help to achieve goals and objectives of the curriculum. Moreover, they offer quality in terms of students' needs and a context with a lot of meaning for students. Finally, they are natural because of the 'real life' language used and the authentic message transmitted (cited in



Tamo 76). Thus, the previous definitions have a point of meeting; authentic materials offer exposure to real language.

A final and more complete definition about authentic materials is expressed by William Guariento and John Morley. They explain authentic text as: "...one 'created to fulfil some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced' With the onset of communicative movement a greater awareness of the need to develop students' skills for the real world has meant that teachers endeavour to simulate this world in the classroom" (Guariento and Morley 347). These authors claim that authentic materials help students to face their social lives with better tools. They think that authentic materials can reduce the gap between classroom knowledge and 'real life' (347).

2.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of using authentic materials in EFL classes

Hamed believes that the purpose of learning a foreign language should be to get any benefit from it. Languages are used to set communication acts among people; therefore, they are useful just when any language is applied in real world, in real situations. Teachers around the world think that course books are not enough to achieve this goal. Researchers and teachers say that authentic materials should be used to improve students' reading skills. If a teacher is concerned about developing students' reading skills, he/she has to use authentic texts. Authentic materials provide several benefits to students when improving reading skills (249). Scholars like Guariento, Wilcox & Weyers say that authentic materials have linguistic and non-linguistic advantages.

2.3.1 Linguistic advantages



The main linguistic advantages of using authentic materials in EFL classes to foster reading skills are:

- Understanding basic and advanced grammatical structures.
- Understanding English syntax.
- Fostering the acquisition of vocabulary.
- Understanding expression and functions of language.
- Improving writing skills.

2.3.2 Non-linguistic advantages

The non-linguistic advantages are:

- *having a positive effect on student motivation;*
- *giving authentic cultural information;*
- *exposing students to real language;*
- *relating more closely to students' needs;*
- *supporting a more creative approach to teaching.* (Berardo 64)

Studies to test these benefits of using authentic material in EFL classes have been conducted around the world, including Ecuador. Those studies found positive results; thus, they support the idea of implementing authentic materials in EFL classes to foster any English skill.

As mention before, authentic materials help to improve the four EFL basic skills; however, this paper centers its attention to reading skills. A study conducted by Yongan Wu with the topic: "*Teaching Young Adult Literature to ESL Students: an Experiment,*" had positive results. It was a qualitative study



with the purpose of exploring literature as resource for extensive reading. Literature is also considered as authentic material because it is not created for language teaching; moreover, literature carries a message to the reader. The researcher had to incorporate observation, instruction and interviewing to collect the data. The participants were part of Midwestern University in Oklahoma. The results showed that learners like to read books which are: short, contain smaller chapters, non-fiction, written in plain, simple, yet formal English, and which discuss social or natural topics using up-to-date information. Similarly, literacy ability was improved, as well as students' motivation. However, the researcher said that scaffolding and an adequate selection of the reading material were important to take into consideration; moreover, the teacher played an important role whenever applying authentic materials because guidance was basic to keep students' motivation high.

Pei Fen Li, in his study *"Exploring the Use of Unsolicited E-mail in EFL Education in Taiwan: Authentic and Critical Literacy in Context,"* investigated the effectiveness of unsolicited e-mails as authentic materials. He also analyzed the responses of advertising e-mail. Instruments used during the investigation included: open-ended questionnaire, participants' weekly reflection notes, and semi-structured interviews. Students' motivation was increased in learning English; moreover, students were able to relate the content of the e-mails with their personal experience, thus, emerging active participation in class. In addition, students' linguistic skills were improved, as well as their knowledge about cultural issues.



A study, with the title *“The Effects of Narrow Reading of Authentic Texts on Interest and Reading Ability in English as a Foreign Language”* conducted by Kyung-Sook Cho et al., showed that elementary students made gains in reading ability. They improved their reading comprehension and vocabulary; moreover, these elementary students gained confidence, as well as interest in reading in English. Actually students started reading books by their own. This study took place in Korea and 37 fourth grade students of English as a foreign language were involved in this study. Cho used questionnaires and open-ended questions to collect the data. This study said that it is possible to use authentic materials with elementary students with great results.

Chen et al. investigated the effects of extensive reading using e-books. The title of the study was *“The Effects of Extensive Reading Via E-books on Tertiary Level EFL students’ Reading attitude, Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary.”* The participants were eighty-nine students. They were assigned in two groups. The control group was integrated by 43 students and the experimental group by 46 students. The students in the experimental group were encouraged to read e-books. The instruments used to collect the data were: Stokmans’s Reading Attitude questionnaire and TOEFL reading comprehension and vocabulary tests. The study showed that the experimental group had a better attitude towards reading; thus, improving reading comprehension and vocabulary. The authors of this study said that e-books (which are considered authentic materials) helped students to improve their reading attitude, reading comprehension and vocabulary.



The research conducted by Siao-cing Guo showed that authentic materials may be used to improve reading skills. The name of this study was *"Using Authentic Materials for Extensive Reading to Promote English Proficiency."* The researcher wanted to discover the impact of authentic materials as the main source of extensive reading. Therefore, three questions were asked: "Does extensive reading of authentic materials have an effect on vocabulary gain?" "Does extensive reading of authentic materials have an effect on improvement of grammar?" "Does extensive reading of authentic materials have an effect on other language skills"? (199). This quantitative study employed a pre-and post-test design using a simulated English proficiency test and an attitudinal survey. Moreover, course exams and students' class participation records were also included to increase validity. This study basically applied on-line materials. Students had to read e-books from the Internet. The researcher took fifty students from two intact classes. The students were from a college in Taiwan. The students were divided in two groups, an experimental group and a control group. Basically, all the students had similar classes; however, the experimental group had extra material to be read at home. These texts were based on authentic articles from magazines and newspapers. The study results indicated a strong relationship between extensive reading and vocabulary development. Moreover, students increased their reading comprehension, their knowledge about expressions in English and topics related to worldwide issues; thus, authentic material helped them to enhance their overall English ability and knowledge. Similarly, authentic materials affected students' motivation. Students improved their interest in reading and learning English outside the



classroom. This work mentioned that teachers must use authentic material in their EFL classes to improve student's reading skills and vocabulary, as well as students' motivation.

Extensive reading has helped students to increase their vocabulary. The previous studies in this paper mentions this fact. Another study conducted by Kazerooni, Shirin Rahimi, Masoud Saeedi, and Vahid Parvaresh got similar results. However, this study used literary works. Literary works may be considered as authentic materials. They are not created to teach English. The name of this study was: *Does Reading Literary Texts have any Impact on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Retention?* This study tried to find out how literature may improve vocabulary acquisition. The participants were 140 Iranian undergraduate students. They were randomly selected among senior students of English literature and English translation. The study used a four-part test in order to collect the data. The questions were in multiple-choice format. The technique used to analyze the information was through the analysis of variance. It was used to determine the statistical significance among group means. The results showed that literary works did not improve reading comprehension; however, the improvement in vocabulary acquisition was representative. Students were able to build up solid new vocabulary. The study recommended the use of literary works in EFL classes. It could improve students' knowledge about culture and vocabulary.

Similarly, the study *"The Use of Authentic Material to Help Twelfth Graders Build up Vocabulary" at "Ciudad de Girón" High School"* found that authentic materials are good for students. This study took place in Girón and



was conducted by Julio T. Álvarez. This author also highly recommended the use of authentic materials in EFL classes to improve students' motivation and vocabulary.

Finally, Peacock, in his study "*The Effect of Authentic Materials on the motivation of EFL learners*," found that authentic materials improved students' motivation in EFL classes. He used two EFL beginner level groups of students. The first one integrated by 15 students and the second one by 16 students. The two groups had male and female students; moreover, their average age was 20. The results of the research showed an improvement of students' motivation; therefore, Peacock recommended the use of authentic materials in EFL classes, but it was important an appropriate selection of the authentic materials to be used depending on the students' level. He also found that authentic materials are interesting for EFL students; thus, they increased their concentration when performing an activity related to the authentic materials used during the class. Finally, students were more participative and active whenever they used authentic materials.

2.3.3 Disadvantages

Some scholars mention some difficulties whenever using authentic materials in EFL classes. Martinez says that authentic materials can have cultural content which is difficult to understand and can create a false impression in students' mind about cultural facts without the proper explanation by the teacher. Moreover, the vocabulary and mixed structures used in authentic texts can demotivate students because they will have a hard time trying to understand the vocabulary and the grammatical structures. Finally,



Martinez also considers authentic materials as materials which need a lot of time to be prepared (cited in Berardo 65).

Similarly, Guariento says that authentic materials can demotivate students who are in a lower level because of the complexity of language used in those texts; thus, authentic texts should be selected or changed according to students' level, interests and needs which demand a lot of time and effort. It makes it hard for teachers to use these kinds of materials (348-351). Moreover, teachers have to give a good explanation of the material used in terms of language structures and vocabulary as well as content showed in the text; otherwise, teachers will lose students' interest due to the difficult content (Guariento 349).

Outlining, authentic materials can have the following disadvantages:

- Cultural implications expressed in authentic materials can be difficult to understand.
- The vocabulary can be difficult and not relevant for students.
- Authentic texts use many structures in a single paragraph; thus, sometimes it is hard for students to understand some passages of a text.
- Authentic materials need to be carefully selected which can be time consuming.

Analyzing the disadvantages of using authentic materials in EFL classes, it can be said that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages (Hamed 252). Moreover, these disadvantages can be avoided by selecting and preparing the material carefully.

2.4 Types of authentic materials



Most of the time when people hear the words “authentic materials,” they tend to relate the term with newspapers and magazines; however, this term involves more than that (Shepherd 1). According to Gebhard, there are four categories:

- Authentic listening/viewing materials. This category includes films, cartoons, news, soap operas, TV show, etc.
- Authentic visual materials. This category is conformed by street signs, magazines, photographs, newspapers pictures, post cards, etc.
- Authentic printed materials. This category involves newspaper articles, magazine articles, books, lyrics of songs, restaurant menus, train tickets, etc.
- Realia used in EFL/ESL classrooms. This category is characterized by the use of dolls, puppets, toys, etc. (Gebhard 103-104)

Knowing that this thesis focuses on fostering reading skills, the category that suits this purpose is “Authentic Printed Materials.”

2.5 Source of Authentic Printed Materials

Didactic material used in EFL classes is very important whenever learning and teaching a foreign language. It is something that teachers have to deal with whenever preparing a class; therefore, it helps a lot knowing where someone can find those resources. As mentioned before, authentic printed materials include newspaper articles, magazine articles, books, lyrics of songs, restaurant menus, train tickets, among others. It can be said everything that is printed and used to communicate something among native speakers. Authentic printed materials can be difficult to get in foreign countries; moreover, trying to get those materials can be expensive, costing up to 3-4 times the original price



(Berardo 62). However, those problems have been solved by the Internet. Actually, the possibilities of using authentic printed materials in EFL classes with the help of the Internet are infinite. Everybody can have access to those resources at a low cost, thus, the Internet has become one of the richest and most important sources of authentic printed materials (Hamed 251). Additionally, the Internet offers updated information.

2.6 Selecting authentic printed materials

There are various sources of authentic printed materials, as mentioned before; therefore, selecting authentic printed materials to be used in EFL classes is not an easy task. Oguz and Bahar point out that authentic texts should be selected carefully. In order to be used effectively, authentic materials should always have an objective and must suit the content of a lesson (331). Moreover, it is important to consider the students' age, level, goals, needs and interests (331).

Authentic texts blend various grammatical structures and language functions at the same time; thus, whenever selecting authentic printed materials, it is important to say that the objective should be to understand meaning and not form (Berardo 62). Otherwise, it will be very frustrating for students especially when reading literature (62).

According to Nuttal, there are three aspects to consider whenever selecting authentic printed materials: Suitability of content, exploitability, and readability (cited in Berardo 62). "Suitability is regarded as the most important one, because it means that reading materials must arouse the learners' interest, meet their needs and motivate them" (Hamed 251). Moreover, the material must



follow and reinforce the course objectives (Al-mahde 28). Similarly, Shomoossi et al. and Paltridge agree with Berardo and Al-mahde regarding this point. They say that authentic texts must suit students' interests, needs and goals; otherwise, the text has no value for the course (cited in Vahid 10).

Exploitability refers to the quality of a text to develop activities needed to help EFL students to foster their reading skills (Berardo 62). Berardo says that “[a] text that [cannot] be exploited for teaching purposes has no use in the classroom. Just because it is in English does not mean that it can be useful” (62). The text has to include important ideas that can be used by students in the real world; moreover, it has to generate discussion among students which adds up to extra motivation in order to read the article (62).

Finally, *Readability* stands for the complexity of the text in terms of function of language, grammar structures, and vocabulary. If a teacher does not want to have a negative effect whenever using authentic printed material, a text must match students' level (Berardo 62). Guariento adds that the texts must be selected carefully when teachers face beginners (348). Aspects such as “lexical and syntactic simplicity”, and “familiarity or predictability” must be taken into consideration; otherwise, students will find it very hard to complete tasks (348). Students' lexical background will influence different aspects of an EFL class such as: “... classroom management, the selection of tasks, the sequencing and execution of tasks, and the focus of micro-skill instruction” (Khaniya 21). However, Spelleri states that an authentic text should be slightly more difficult to challenge students' level in order to foster motivation, awareness, and curiosity (cited in Vahid, Azad, and Ambigapathy 9). Similarly, Berardo points out that



authentic texts should challenge students' level, but the task must be slightly difficult. A teacher cannot exaggerate when setting a task, so exercises based on authentic materials must be carefully built (62).

Besides the previous criteria to select authentic printed materials, Berardo adds on two important points to allow for whenever choosing authentic printed materials for EFL classes: variety and presentation (62). Whenever using authentic printed materials, they must be attractive for learners; otherwise, they will feel demotivated. It is very important to present different topics based on students' needs and interests. It has been demonstrated that learners find it very boring to deal with just one area; therefore, variety is very important (62). According to Valencia, the authentic texts selected must have themes and ideas that can be discussed during the EFL class. Those ideas should reflect real world events, leaving students to develop higher states of thinking (cited in Vahid 11). Presentation plays an important role, too. A teacher cannot just look for an article on the Internet and print it. It is important to glamorize the text in order to grasp students' attention and interest. Teachers can use various visual aids and realia to achieve this objective. The important point, here, is to motivate students to read the article (Berardo 62-63).

To sum up, authentic texts should be selected following these criteria:

- *Topic should be accessible to learners*
- *Length of text should not be intimidating to beginning readers*
- *Linguistic level should be slightly above the reader's own level unless the tasks are closely structured to involve focused reading*



- *Clues to meaning should be abundant such as contextual, verbal, pictorial, and linguistic.* (Galloway, cited in Haley and Austing 160-161)

2.7 Reading Skill

“Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information” (Anderson et al. 7). This work takes this definition as its frame to have a clear perspective of what is reading; due to that everyone has their own understanding of what is reading. Reading is a basic activity that human beings do all the time (Berardo 62). “However reading always has a purpose”; thus, a person may read to survive, learn, and for pleasure (63).

When reading, there are two process that a person does; the first one creates meaning by decoding symbols to create words. The words are joined to create sentence and the sentences describe what is happening in the text (Andrade 15-16). This process is called Bottom-Up and cannot occur without a basic knowledge of the language itself (16). Moreover, when readers create meaning just based on this process, according to Berardo, it is a synonym of poor and slow reading (67).

The second process is called Bottom-Down. It happens when readers create meaning based on their “Schema”. They find “clues” in the text, make predictions about the text, and relate the new information with their own



experience (Berardo 61). This process is associated with good readers; thus, they do not read word by word, but they guess what is coming based on their high level of knowledge about the language, as well as general information about how the world works (Andrade 17).

The “Schema” theory refers to what someone knows about the world and his/her experience facing his/her world (Barlett, cited in Berardo 61). It affects the understanding of a text and helps to predict the information showed by the author (Andrade 17). Good readers analyze, compare and update their schema based on the new information, as well as they can refuse to accept the new information because it does not go along with their schema (Berardo 61).

The Bottom-UP and the Bottom-Down are processes that in skilled readers happen simultaneously. These processes are called the interactive model. According to this model, reading is an interactive process where the Bottom-Down process predicts meaning and the Bottom-Up confirms the prediction; otherwise, it would be impossible to set a conversations between the writer and the reader (Andrade 18-19).

Readers need to develop some basic skills in order to get this level of processing. One of the most basic skills is called “Decoding”. It refers to the ability that a student has to relate printed words with their actual sound (Salgado 37). In order to achieve this skill, students must be taught in early stages that English is made up of units called words, and this words are made up of alphabetic symbols; thus phoneme awareness plays its role, leading students to relate to spoken words with those symbols (graphemes); therefore, basic knowledge of phonemes as well as principles like blending and



syllabification are need in this process of decoding, allowing students to improve their pronunciation skills. (Cabrera 17-18).

When students are able to pronounce and recognize words, another important skill is needed. This is related to the amount of vocabulary that a student has (Salgado 30). Vocabulary allows students to improve their understanding of a text; therefore, teachers must help students to expand their vocabulary, as well as to provide them with strategies to decode meaning. Guessing the meaning of a word based on context and teaching roots are two great strategies to improve this skill (Cabrera 19).

Being able to decode and knowing the meaning of words in a text, students should work on their fluency. Fluency is a reading skill and according to The National Reading Panel report, reading fluency is defined as "...the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression" (qtd. in Pikulski and Chard 510). In fact, Pikulski and Chard express that this skill is consider as the bridge between decoding and reading comprehension; therefore, teaching sight recognitions of common words and expressions should be a priority in the early stages in order to help students improve their fluency, as well as their comprehension (Salgado 29).

Finally, according to Horowitz, one of the most complex and needed skills to develop in a student is the reading comprehension skill; since it involves a series of skills and strategies all working together in order to extract meaning from an entire text (Education.com). When a person reads, he/she is using at the same time decoding skills (alphabetic symbols recognition, phoneme awareness, blending and syllabification principles), Vocabulary knowledge; and



Fluency skills (Brummitt-Yale, K12reader.com). They already enable a person to read, but in his/her basic level. Actually these types of readers are called passive readers because they cannot interact with the text. Here is where reading comprehension plays its role, letting students move from passive reading to active reading. Active reading needs the basic skills described above, as well as comprehension skills and strategies in order to be able to interact with any text (Cabrera 21-22).

2.7.1 Reading comprehension skills

According to the website Benchmarkeducation.com, student with a high level of comprehension are able to:

- Interpret and evaluate events, dialogue, ideas, and information
- Connect information to what they already know
- Adjust current knowledge to include new ideas or look at those ideas in a different way
- Determine and remember the most important points in the reading
- Read “between the lines” to understand underlying meanings.

(Benchmarkeducation.com)

As found in the same website, these abilities are develop by practicing, as well as the use of strategies; therefore, reading comprehension skills should be modeled by teachers once students are able to decode written text. It will



guarantee skilled readers which will be able to extract meaning from different type of texts.

Some of the basic reading comprehension skills to develop in students are provided below.

a) Discovering the main idea and identifying detail

Welker says that students should be taught that in each paragraph there is a main idea. This idea can be explicit or implied in the text; thus, they must be able to see the difference between main ideas and supporting details in order to simplify the processes of summarizing, outlining, remembering and learning (Theintelligencer.net).

b) Sequencing Events

A key point to understand a text is to be able to recall events in order, as they happen in the text; so reading comprehension activities should foster this skill in order to create a meaningful sequence, needed for further analysis, as well as discussion activities in the classroom (Pugalee 133).

c) Understanding cause and effect

This skill helps students to create connections between an event and its outcomes; therefore, students will be able to predict ideas, events, situations, among others. Activities created to foster this skill should teach words like: because, thus, consequently, therefore, among others (Pugalee 61).

d) Summarizing

Summarizing helps students to identify and express with their own words the main ideas of a text, as well as it leaves behind irrelevant information,



leading students to integrate the most important ideas in a short text (Lanning 29).

e) Making Inferences and Drawing conclusions

Hammond points out that these skills are very similar because both require details taken from the text to come up with a result. Making inferences are ideas that a student figures out based on the facts or details in a text; on the other hand, drawing conclusions involves a logical assumption as the result of the information read (classroom.synonym.com).

f) Comparing and contrasting ideas

These skills allow students to discover how ideas are similar or completely different. Comparing ideas helps students to find similarities between paragraphs, books, authors, among others; on the other hand, contrasting ideas lets students find differences (Myers 96).

g) Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion

Facts are true information taken from scientific sources; in contrast, opinions are personal ideas expressed by authors; therefore, students need to distinguish between the both of them in order to read any text critically, as well as to improve comprehension (Myers 112).

h) Determining Author's Purpose

When someone writes something, they have a purpose in mind. A text can inform, contrast, persuade, entertain, among others. Finding the writer's intention is a key point to analyze the text critically (Myers 108).



i) Identifying Figurative Language

It is important to know what figurative language is to avoid misunderstandings while reading a text. As found on the website yourdictionary.com in its article “Figurative Language,” authors tend to use language that does not have a literal meaning; thus, letting them play with the language and generate opportunities to present ideas in an interesting way. People think that figurative language is used just in literature; however, it is not true. Figurative language can be found in prose and nonfiction writing; therefore, terms like simile, metaphor, idiom, among others should be taught by teachers in early stages of EFL classes (yourdictionary.com).

j) Generating and Answering Questions

Skilled readers tend to ask themselves questions about a text before, during and after reading; therefore, while reading they try to find those answers in the text, allowing students to predict, make inferences, read critically, and remember facts (Moreillon 58-61).

According to the website Benchmarkeducation.com, reading is not an easy task, since it requires the use of different skills at the same time. Students tend to develop some of them easily; however, other skills like identifying the main idea and making inferences require more modeling. Teachers should plan and select their teaching strategies carefully to motivate and develop skilled and independent readers (Benchmarkeducation.com).

2.8 Strategies to foster reading skills

Nickols says that the word strategy “...is a term that refers to a complex web of thoughts, ideas, insights, experiences, goals, expertise, memories,



perceptions, and expectations that provides general guidance for specific actions in pursuit of particular ends” (nickols.us). Thus reading strategies are specific actions to help students to improve their comprehension, letting them to extract meaning from any text, as well as to motivate them to be independent readers. Reading is not just decoding and being able to read fluently, reading goes beyond; therefore, teachers play an important role in modeling and guiding students before, during and after the reading process by using and implementing strategies that suit and improve students’ reading skills (McNamara 3-10).

According to Cox, there are three moments while reading a text in EFL classes; before, during, and after. Thus teachers have to use specific strategies for each moment; otherwise, the EFL class will be unsuccessful (teachhub.com).

2.8.1 Before-reading strategies

a) Motivating

Motivation is very important before performing an activity. Students need to feel that they will be able to accomplish a goal successfully; thus, one of the teachers’ tasks is to keep students motivated during the whole reading process by implementing strategies and activities based on a series of factors (Solé, cited in Peñafiel and Villalba 20). As found on Gambrell and Marinak’s Internet article, “Researchers have identified a number of factors important to reading motivation including self-concept and value of reading, choice; time spent talking about books, types of text available, and the use of incentives” (readingrockets.org).



b) Setting Objectives

Pintrich and Schunk express that setting objectives helps teachers to provide a clear vision of what students are going to learn (cited in Dean et al., www.ascd.org); Moreover, Dean et al. points out, “[w]hen teachers communicate objectives for student learning, students can see the connections easily between what they are doing in class and what they are supposed to learn”. Setting objectives helps students to focus on specific aspects of the text, reducing the stress produced by the quantity of information that students read; thus, contributing to students’ motivation (www.ascd.org).

c) Activating prior knowledge

Prior knowledge refers to what a student already know about a topic. Previous knowledge helps students to improve their comprehension while reading because they are able to make connections between their experience and the new information, allowing deeper learning; moreover, students’ motivation and interest are affected positively (Marinaccio 8-12). Combining these strategies with the previous one (setting objectives), students discover what they already know and what to expect from the text (Peñafiel y Villaba 21).

There are various strategies to activate prior knowledge; below, this work mentions some of them.

i) Brainstorming

This strategy allows students to express their thoughts about a certain topic. Teachers can use the title of a text, a photo, a passage from a text, and



anything that can be used to motivate students to participate and share their thoughts with their partners (Chapman 133). Some suggestions to proceed with this strategy are provided below.

- Collect and accept all ideas
- Avoid comments that judge, evaluate, or analyze thoughts.
- Encourage individuals to piggyback on the ideas of others.
- Post the thoughts on a chart or board for future reference during the study. Label this “Our Brainstorming.”
- Praise and encourage all student to participate. (Chapman 133)

Additionally, students can get in groups and share their ideas in order to make just one list that they can share in front of the class (133).

ii) Pre-questions

As found on the website studyngs.net, this strategy helps to find out what students already know about a topic. Teachers provide a list with some questions related to the topic and ask student to answer them. It can be done orally or in a written form; moreover, students can work alone or in groups (studyngs.net)

iii) KWL Chart

It is a simple chart with three columns. The first column refers to what students **Know (K)**; therefore, this sections allows students to recall prior information related to the topic that is going to be read. The second column stands for what students **want to know (W)**, allowing then to write questions



about what they want to discover while reading. Finally, the third column shows what students have **learnt (L)** (Spangler and Mazzante 15). Some suggestions to use this strategy are provided by the www.msu.edu website below.

A. "Know" Step:

- Initiate discussion with the students about what they already know about the topic of the text.
- Start by using a brainstorm procedure. Ask students to provide information about where and how they learned the information.
- Help them organize the brainstormed ideas into general categories.

B. "Want to Learn" Step:

- Discuss with the students what they want to learn from reading an article.
- Ask them to write down the specific questions in which they are more interested.

C. "What I Learned" Step:

- Ask the students to write down what they learned from the reading.
- Ask them to check the questions they had generated in the "Want to Learn" Step. (www.msu.edu)

iv) List-group-level



This strategy provides students with a structure where they can organize their ideas about a topic, letting student to activate their prior knowledge. Basically, students have to use as many words as they know and categorize them in sections provided by a teacher (Clark 212). The steps to manage this strategy are provided by the website readingrockets.org below.

- Select a main concept in a reading selection.
- List: Have students brainstorm all the words they think relate to the topic.
 - o Visually display student responses.
 - o At this point do not critique student responses. Some words may not reflect the main concept, but hopefully students will realize this as they begin grouping the words in the next step.
- Group: Divide your class into small groups. Each group will work to cluster the class list of words into subcategories. As groups of words emerge, challenge your students to explain their reasoning for placing words together or discarding them.
- Label: Invite students to suggest a title or label for the groups of words they have formed. These labels should relate to their reasoning for the grouping. (readingrockets.org, “List-Group-Label”)

v) Anticipation Guide



An Anticipation Guide helps student to activate their prior knowledge by providing them with a list of statements taken from the text that they are going to read and having them to decide where they agree or disagree; therefore, students will compare their own ideas with the author's while reading the text, resulting in an active conversations between the text and the students, as well generating an strong motivation to keep on reading about the topic in other sources (Wood et al. 89). Some suggestions about how to proceed with this strategy are provided by the website readingrockets.org below.

- Construct the anticipation guide. Construction of the anticipation guide should be as simple as possible for younger students. Write four to six statements about key ideas in the text; some true and some false. Include columns following each statement, which can be left blank or can be labeled Yes, or No (*Maybe* can also be used).

NOTE: Teachers may wish to create an additional column for revisiting the guide after the material has been read.

- Model the process. Introduce the text or reading material and share the guide with the students. Model the process of responding to the statements and marking the columns.
- Read each of the statements and ask the students if they agree or disagree with it. Provide the opportunity for discussion. The emphasis is not on right answers but to share what they know and to make predictions.



- Read the text aloud or have students read the selection individually. If reading aloud, teachers should read slowly and stop at places in the text that correspond to each of the statements.
- Bring closure to the reading by revisiting each of the statements.
(readingrockets.org, “Anticipation Guide”)

d) Vocabulary overview guide

This strategy helps students to overcome difficulties when facing new vocabulary by allowing them to make connections between words that they already know with new vocabulary. Vocabulary overview are graphic organizers where teachers show important words, needed to understand the text, and ask students to relate them with vocabulary that is common for them. Additionally, this strategy can be used while reading to pick up words that each students may find unknown (Sejnost and Thiese 82).

2.8.2 During-reading strategies

a) Decoding text

Teachers can use this strategy to keep students motivated as well as attentive during the reading process. Basically, teachers model the strategy by providing student with symbols that they can use in specific circumstances while reading. For instance, student can draw a question mark next to something that they do not understand, or they can place an asterisk next to something that is interesting. Students can use any symbol, but they must be modeled by the teacher to know where they can be used (Harvey and Anne Goudvis 57).



b) Re-reading

According to Robb, this strategy helps students to improve comprehension skills while reading by giving them the opportunity to reflect about the authors' ideas; thus, allowing the modification of one's "schema" by accepting or refusing the new information. Additionally, students improve their ability to remember specific details about a text as well as their ability to learn new vocabulary. Students commonly do not like to re-read; so teachers play an important role in order to model this strategy. They can start providing specific tasks each time they read. Those tasks would show that the more you read, the more you understand (teacher.scholastic.com).

c) Concept maps

They are graphic organizers that allow students to categorize the information found in a text while reading. Teachers have to elaborate those concept maps in advance and show them to class before starting the reading activity. Students should become familiar with the graphic organizer in order to start filling it. Concept maps are good at developing linking skills between ideas, authors, concepts, as well as allowing students to remember specific details of a text (Macceca 72).

d) Question the author

This strategy helps student to be involved actively with the authors' ideas by setting a series of questions while reading, allowing students to criticize the author's work. Teachers can model this strategy by providing student with some questions at the beginning of the activity; however, the main purpose of this strategy is to encourage students to create their own questions while reading



(Sejnost and Thiese, “Building Content Literacy” 46-47). In order to use this strategy, some steps are provided by Beck et al. on the website readingrockets.org below.

- Select a passage that is both interesting and can spur a good conversation.
- Decide appropriate stopping points where you think your students need to obtain a greater understanding.
- Create queries or questions for each stopping point.
 - o What is the author trying to say?
 - o Why do you think the author used the following phrase?
 - o Does this make sense to you?
- Display a short passage to your students along with one or two queries you have designed ahead of time.
- Model for your students how to think through the queries.
- Ask students to read and work through the queries you have prepared for their readings. (Beck et al., cited in readingrockets.org, “Question The Author”)

e) Partner reading

This strategy helps students to improve reading comprehension through feedback, provided by partners and teachers. Basically, students have to select a partner and start reading a passage of the text while the other is listening. They have to change roles several times as they read the full text. Moreover,



this strategy improves fluency as well as decoding skills since the partner and teacher are very attentive to the pronunciation (Kuhn and Schwanenflugel 42-44).

2.8.3 After-reading strategies

a) Exit slips

This strategy allows teachers to monitor students' comprehension of a text. The teacher provides a series of questions related to the text, but the responses to those questions must be short. The students must be able to solve the questionnaire within a couple of minutes. The important point of this strategy is to check comprehension as well as to provide feedback (Elabsy 112).

b) Question-Answer Relationship

This strategy teaches students to differentiate between information literally content in the text and information that is not explicit; thus, this strategy uses three types of questions: "... (1) "right there" (text explicit), (2) "think and search" (text implicit), and (3) "on my own" (script implicit)" (Reid, Lienemann and Hagaman 213-214). The first type of questions can be answered by looking for the information in a single line or paragraph; however, the second type of questions require an analysis of several paragraphs in order to build the answer. Finally. The third type involves students' prior knowledge, going beyond the authors' ideas, letting student to express their own experience (213-214).

c) Summarizing

Being able to find the main ideas as well as specific details needed to comprehend the whole text is the goal of summarizing. This strategy allows students to condense large amounts of text into short passages; therefore,



recognizing main ideas and linking them into a meaningful text are skills needed in this strategy. Additionally, modeling this strategy will help students when studying content subject (Lanning 26-28).

2.9 Activities to foster reading skills

There are a lot of reading activities in books, as well as on the Internet; however, teachers can adapt and create their own activities based on the previous strategies. It depends on how creative a teacher can be. Moreover, the activities must be adapted according to the students' needs and unit goals. This work suggests some common activities used in EFL classes below.

2.9.1 Before-reading activities

These activities help teachers to overcome some difficulties when reading a text in class. They allow student to recall their prior knowledge, helping to reduce the stress generated by "... linguistic, cultural and conceptual difficulties;" moreover, they allow students to make predictions, improving their motivation and interest about the text (Salgado 37).

a) Word splash

Word Splash allows students to practice the four English skills; moreover, it is fun and motivational. Some steps in order to carry out this activity are provided by the website portal.state.pa.us below.

- First, select 7-10 key words or phrases from the given text; use words that are both familiar and unfamiliar to the students.
- Dictate the words to the students so that they have to try to spell the words.



- Have students write a short story of at least seven lines using all the words.
- Give students a chance to share their stories with a partner; then select several students to read their story aloud.
- Read the given text to see if any student-generated story was similar to the text. (portal.state.pa.us)

b) Key words

This activity is similar to the previous one; however, in this case, they have to write an informative paragraph about what they think the text is about. In order to do this activity in class, some steps are provided by the website portal.state.pa.us below.

- First, select 7-10 key words from the given text that may challenge the students.
- Have words on the board for students to copy down or give them a list.
- Students are to write an informative paragraph(s) using all the key words provided.
- Allow students to share their essay with a partner; then select a few students to read their paragraph(s) aloud.
- Read the given text to see how accurate the essays were. (portal.state.pa.us)



c) Predicting from words and phrases

This activity allows students to make predictions about the text based on words that the teacher writes on the whiteboard.

- First, select 7-10 key words or phrases from the text.
- Write the words on the whiteboard and ask students to think about what the text would be about.
- Ask students randomly for predictions about the text.
- Have students in groups of 2 or 3 and ask them to share their expectations about the text.
- Ask each group to write a paragraph about their predictions.

An alternative for this activity is to write the title or the first sentence of the selected text and follow the same previous steps.

d) Predicting from illustrations

This activity provides a visual aid to help students to make predictions about the text.

- Bring a photo related to the selected text.
- Show the photo and ask students to make predictions about the text.
- Ask students to get in groups of 2 or 3 and share their predictions.
- Have each group in front of the class and share their predictions with their partners.

An alternative for this activity is to show a series of pictures related to the topic in order and ask students to write down their predictions about the text.

2.9.2 During-reading activities



After getting an idea of what the text is about, students have to face the text itself; where during reading activities are necessary to encourage and motivate students to read. Moreover, they help to check understanding and guide students during this process that sometimes takes a lot of time (Salgado 38).

a) Sticky notes

The sticky notes can be used to write many things, such as: unknown words, unknown expressions, questions, important information, among others. They can be pasted on the text and then removed for further help in other activities. The website portal.state.pa.us give some suggestions to carry out this activity below.

- Students are given a stack (based on length of text) of sticky notes.
- Instruct students to summarize, question, jot down thoughts or ideas they are having about the text while reading. (The questions can be raised in class and [then answered])
- There is no right or wrong answer and assessment is solely based on the students' participation in transacting with the text.
- Sticky notes can be saved, attached to a sheet of paper or a folder, and used later as part of a study guide to recall what a given text was about. (portal.state.pa.us)



b) LIT Circles

A Literature Circle is an activity where students are able to share their thoughts and learnings about the text. This activity requires students to work in groups of 4 or 6; moreover, learners have to play a specific role in the group. Teachers may invest a lot of time and hard work to mold this activity; but, the awards are delightful. The website portal.state.pa.us provides information how students should work when performing this activity below; thus, the first step is to know the role of each student:

Discussion Director: Develops a list of 4 or 5 questions pertaining to a section of the text for the group to discuss. Questions should be divergent, higher-level of thinking, and open ended. The discussion director facilitates the conversations to ensure the “larger ideas” in the text are discussed.

Connector: Makes connections between the text the group is reading and the outside world. Connect situations from the text to happenings at school or in the community, to similar events at other times and places, to other places, to other people or problems in the real world.

Vocabulary Enricher: Finds 5 to 8 especially important words in a given section of reading. Notes the page number, paragraph, word, and the definition for each word.



Summarizer: Prepares a brief summary of the given [reading sections]. Highlight the key points and main events.

(portal.state.pa.us)

This activity requires to follow these steps:

- Students are designated a text.
 - Students form groups of 4 or 6 partners.
 - Teacher names the role of each student.
 - Students start reading and sharing their findings as they read the text.
 - Students record all the thoughts shared by their partners.
 - When students are done, they start the discussion.
 - The students' discussion must be open and natural; so, every comment and questions are welcome.
 - The teacher works as a facilitator.
 - Finally, students share their findings with the rest of the class
- (portal.state.pa.us).

c) Modeled reading

This activity allows students to hear the correct pronunciations of words and intonation of the sentences; moreover, a teacher can explain unknown words and expressions while reading. The teacher can use body language, photos, realia, and everything that can help to convey meaning (Salgado 38).

- The teacher has to pick up some words and expressions that he/she considers to be difficult or unknown to his/her students.



- The teacher has to prepare material to help students to understand the unknown expressions and words. It can be photos, realia, among others.
- In class, the teacher picks up the text and starts reading aloud, modelling the pronunciation and intonation of the text. Students have to pick up their texts, too; but, they just follow the reading with their eyes.
- While reading, the teacher can use the visual aid to convey meaning.
- After finishing, the teacher has to ask a student to start over. Leaving the student to read for a while, then the teacher asks another student to continue. This chain continues until the end of the text, trying to involve all the students.

d) Pause and predict

This activity allows students to predict while they reading. Helping to improve the motivation and interest in reading the text (Salgado 39).

- The teacher picks up the text and starts reading aloud. Students do the same; but, they just follow the reading with their eyes.
- While the teacher is reading, he/she stops reading and asks students to close their books.
- Students make predictions about the text.

2.9.3 After-reading activities

At this point, students should be able to read the text without much effort. Students should understand difficult words and expression, as well as conceptual and cultural content. It is necessary to achieve this objective because the following activities attempt to use and manipulate the text according to the students' needs (Salgado 40).

a) Read to act



In this activity, students have to perform what they have read; therefore, the material selected for this activity must have a plot. The students can use the characters from the text, as well as the dialogues. Moreover, students can adapt the text according to their preferences (Rustipa 128). Some steps are provided below.

Step 1: The whole class is divided into groups, and each group selects a director. The job of the director is to assign different roles to students and organize the rehearsal of their performances.

Step 2: Students read the story while focusing on the plot, which will be expressed through their acting. Students do not take any notes at this point.

Step 3: The directors lead their respective groups in planning and rehearsing their performances. Students do not refer to the text; they rely on their memories for the performance of the story.

Step 4: After the first rehearsal, students read the story again to see if they can make any variations to their performance, especially to their lines of dialogue. Students take notes about key words they will need to deliver their lines.

Step 5: Students rehearse their performances a second time. If necessary, they may refer to their notes.

Step 6: Finally, a competition is held to see which group offers the best performance of the story. (Rustipa 128)



b) Read to debate

The name of this activity says it all. Students, after reading, are encouraged to discuss about the article they have just read. This activity encourages students to defend a point of view based on their previous prior knowledge and the new information read (Rustipa 129).

Step 1: Students read the text while focusing on the controversial topic. Students do not take any notes at this point.

Step 2: Students form pairs and debate the issue with their partner. One student will argue in favor of the issue and one will argue against it. Students are required to quote ideas from the text to support their arguments.

Step 3: Students read the article again to discover useful expressions and additional ideas to support their point of view. Students take notes of key words they will need.

Step 4: Students participate in a whole class or a group debate. Besides quoting ideas from the text, students are encouraged to personalize the topic with information about themselves. (Rustipa 129)

c) Read to interview

This activity allows students to practice how to ask questions; moreover, they practice how to explain ideas from a text with their own words.



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Step 1: Students read the text to get as many ideas as possible.

They do not take any notes at this point.

Step 2: Students form pairs, and one member acts as the interviewer and the other the interviewee. The interviewer asks questions related to the content of the text. The interviewee is required to use the ideas or facts in the text to answer those questions.

Step 3: Students read the text again to see if there are any other questions to ask. This time they take notes and write down some key words.

Step 4: Student pairs conduct the interview again, but this time they switch roles. They can find new partners, but they must play a different role that they did in Step 2.

Step 5: A competition is organized to see which pair can best represent the text through their interview. (Rustipa 129)



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Type and research design

This research used a mixed method approach. “A mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem” (Creswell 535). Therefore, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed in order to elaborate a booklet according to students and teachers’ needs.

Applied research analyzes specific issues about a situation, and accomplishes a goal in order to solve a specific problem. Applied research takes data from the real world for practical application (Stanovich 106). Thus this research was applied because it tried to solve a socio-educative problem by generating information about the lack of using authentic materials in EFL classes and developing a booklet to face this reality.

The methodology design also suits this work as nonexperimental research. According to the book *Psychology Research Methods: Core Skills and Concepts*, “Nonexperimental research is research that lacks the manipulation of an independent variable, random assignment of participants to conditions or orders of conditions, or both” (165). This research did not modify the variables. It just observed and analyzed the sample in its natural context. The data collected helped to elaborate the booklet, but it was not applied.



The investigation was transversal because it just described a specific time and space. It took place at “Angel Modesto Paredes” High School and analyzed data from tenth grade students during the school year 2014-2015.

Correlational studies have as their main purpose to see the relationship between variables; if a relationship exists, then the possibility to make predictions about population’s behavior arises. This statistical analysis of data provides a direction for the study (Creswell 338). Therefore, this research was a correlational study because it aimed to determine the degree of relationship between variables in order to determine the use of authentic materials to foster reading skills. Moreover, this study was descriptive. The variables were analyzed independently for a better interpretation of the phenomenon.

Finally, it was of field because it was necessary to go to the high school in order to collect the data.

3.2 Instrument for data collection

The instruments for data collection play an important role whenever carrying out a research. The data must have validity and reliability. These were important in order to accomplish the objectives of this research.

This research used questionnaires to collect the data needed to analyze the sample. According to Creswell “A questionnaire is a form used in a survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher. The participant chooses answers to questions and supplies basic personal or demographic information” (382). Questionnaires play an important role when doing research; besides the low cost in time and money, these tools provide the opportunity to collect data from a large sample very easily. These data are



simple to analyze and interpret; allowing the researcher to elaborate dependable conclusions. Moreover, closed questions lead to gather just data that really matter in the development of the thesis; however, the most relevant point about questionnaires is the lack of bias since students respond anonymously without the pressure of teachers or the researcher, improving the trustworthiness of the information (Gillham 1-8).

The questionnaire had twelve questions (see appendix 1). The questions number 1, 2 and 3 were designed to verify students' attitude towards reading in English classes. Questions 4 and 5 were developed to find out the frequency of authentic printed materials in EFL classes as well as the use of these materials to develop reading skills. Questions 6 and 7 tried to find out information about students' basic reading skills (Decoding and Fluency). Finally, questions 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 were designed to evaluate the students' reading comprehension skills. Each question provided five options to respond. These qualitative and quantitative parameters were:

- **5=A (Always)**
- **4=U (Usually)**
- **3=S (Sometimes)**
- **2=R (Rarely)**
- **1=N (Never)**



These parameters had the following values: (5=A) Always represented a value of 100 percent, (4=U) Usually the 75 percent, (3=S) Sometimes the 50 percent, (2=R) Rarely the 25 percent, and (1=N) Never the 0 percent. Moreover, if a student did not answer one of the questions, the answer was considered as "Never."

The instruments used in a survey need to be reliable; thus Joppe defines reliability as:

...The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. (qtd. in Golafshani 598)

The reliability was measured using a pilot test and the Cronbach's Alpha. "Pilot tests are "dress rehearsals" of full survey operations that are implemented to determine whether problems exist that need to be addressed prior to putting the production survey in the field" (Rothgeb); thus pilot tests helped to see the accuracy of the questionnaire created to carry out the survey. The questionnaire was applied to 15% of the sample which in this case were 16 students, and this was used in order to validate the survey. The data were analyzed using the Cronbach's alpha.



Cronbach's Alpha helps to measure internal consistency or average correlation of items in a questionnaire in order to see how reliable the instrument is (Garson 125).

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

According to the website UCLA, "here N is equal to the number of items, c-bar is the average inter-item covariance among the items and v-bar equals the average variance" (ats.ucla.edu). The results, after collecting the data and applying the Cronbach's Alpha, were:

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Chart Nº 1. Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	16	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	16	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Source: *Carmona.*

Chart Nº 2. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
,875	12

Source: *Carmona.*



George and Mallery provide the following rules of thumb: “ $\alpha > .9$ – Excellent, $\alpha > .8$ – Good, $\alpha > .7$ – Acceptable, $\alpha > .6$ – Questionable, $\alpha > .5$ – Poor, and $\alpha < .5$ – Unacceptable” (231); therefore, the reliability coefficient obtained with this instrument is Good.

Similarly, the instrument used in a survey must be valid. “Validity refers to the extent to which theory and evidence support the test as a measure of the construct or attribute that it was designed to measure” (Weiner et al. 433). The validity of the instrument was done with the help of the theses advisor.

3.3 Population and Sample

“The population is simply all the members of the group that you are interested in” (Burgess 4). This project focused its attention on tenth grade students at “Angel Modesto Paredes” high school. The students were divided in three groups: classroom “A” had 38 students, classroom “B” had 35 students, and classroom “C” had 34 students which adding up to 107 students.

“A sample is a sub-set of the population that is usually chosen because to access all members of the population is prohibitive in time, money and other resources” (Burgess 4). Due to the size of the sample, the entire population was analyzed for the purpose of this research.

3.4 Data processing and analysis

Data were collected among student who filled the questionnaires. These data were processed with the help of two software: SPSS 19 and Excel 2010. The software SPSS 19 was used to introduce and analyze the data collected in the pilot test. After analyzing the data, the software showed the reliability of the questionnaire based on the Cronbach’s alpha. The result showed that the



questionnaire was reliable; therefore, the researcher proceeded to apply the questionnaire to the rest of the population.

The software Excel 2010 was used to introduce and analyze the data collected after applying the questionnaire to the population; moreover, the same software was used to design the graphics as well as to show the percentages of the results. Finally, percentages were analyzed in order to set conclusions and recommendations.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results obtained after carrying out the survey were extracted using the software Excel 2010 by Microsoft. The data introduced in the software were reviewed several times in order to avoid errors. When all the data were uploaded in the software, the researcher proceeded to calculate the number of times the questionnaire repeated the same responses, as well as to calculate the percentages of all the data.

Twelve frequency charts were designed. Those charts show the item, parameter, frequency, percentage and cumulative percentage. The charts have as their titles the question used in the survey. Each chart has its bar graphs, where the title is a statement of the question.

The analysis of results consists of three paragraphs: the first paragraph is a general notion of each indicator, the second paragraph describes the data based on the cumulative percentage of each item, and in the third paragraph the conclusion and recommendation of the results for each item is given.

4.1 Analysis and interpretation

QUESTIONNAIRE

When you are taking English classes:

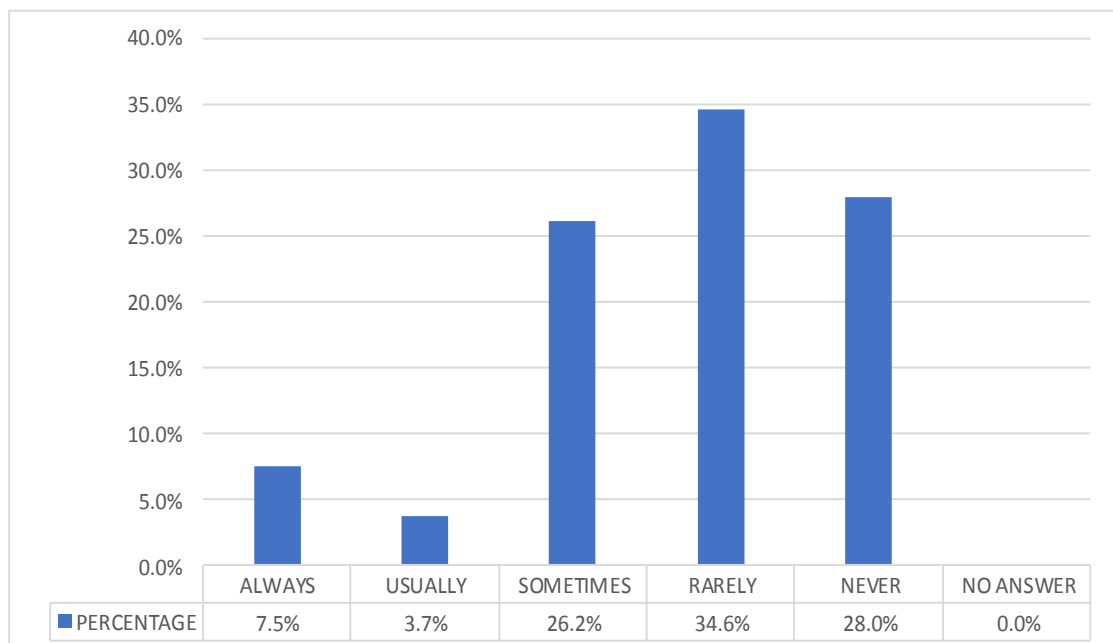


Chart N° 3. Do you like reading in English?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	ALWAYS	8	7,5%
	USUALLY	4	3,7%
	SOMETIMES	28	26,2%
	RARELY	37	34,6%
	NEVER	30	28,0%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.

Graph N° 1. Students' attitude towards reading in English classes.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 1 tried to discover students' feelings towards reading in English.

In the item N ° 1, the parameter rarely obtained a percentage of 34.6, being the highest frequency. Then the parameter never achieved 28.0%, followed by the parameter sometimes with a percentage of 26.2. Finally, the parameters always and usually acquired 7.5% and 3.7% respectively.



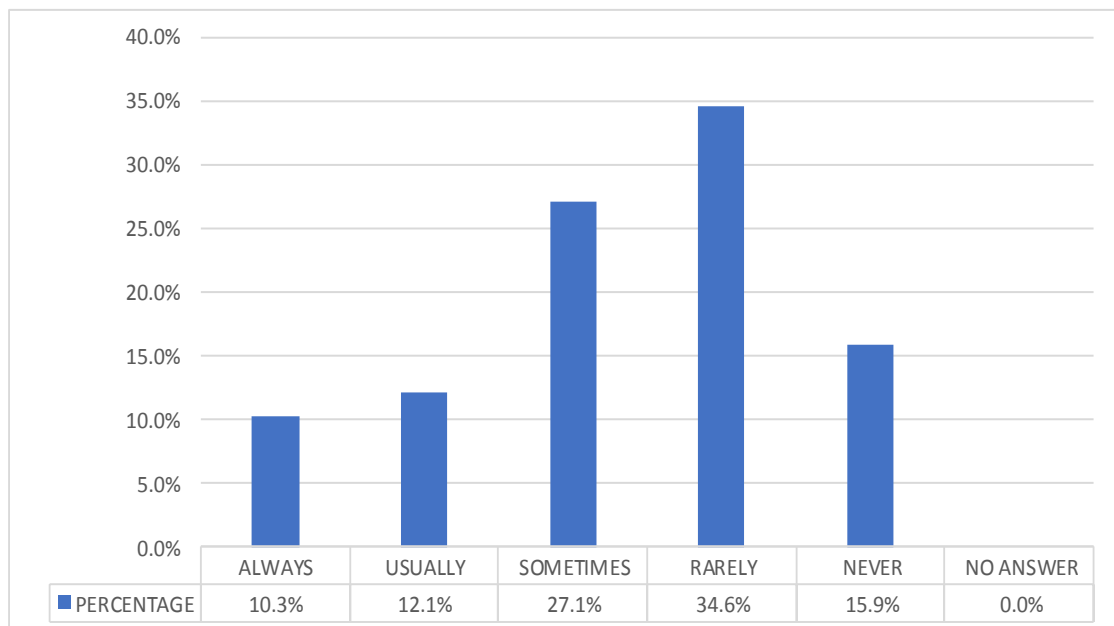
Taking into account the previous results, it can be concluded that students do not like reading in English. It is caused due to the lack of motivation, the lack of appropriate methodology and didactic material; therefore, teachers should look for new ways of making reading activities pleasant in order to change students' feelings about reading in English.

Chart N° 4. Do you read interesting topics?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
2	ALWAYS	11	10,3%
	USUALLY	13	12,1%
	SOMETIMES	29	27,1%
	RARELY	37	34,6%
	NEVER	17	15,9%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.

Graph N° 2. Use of interesting topics in English classes.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 2 refers to the use of texts, which are considered as interesting for the students.



In the item N ° 2, the parameter rarely acquired a percentage of 34.6, being the most selected. Then the parameter sometimes reached 27.1%, followed by the parameter never with a percentage of 15.9. Finally, the parameters usually and always attained 12.1% and 10.3% respectively.

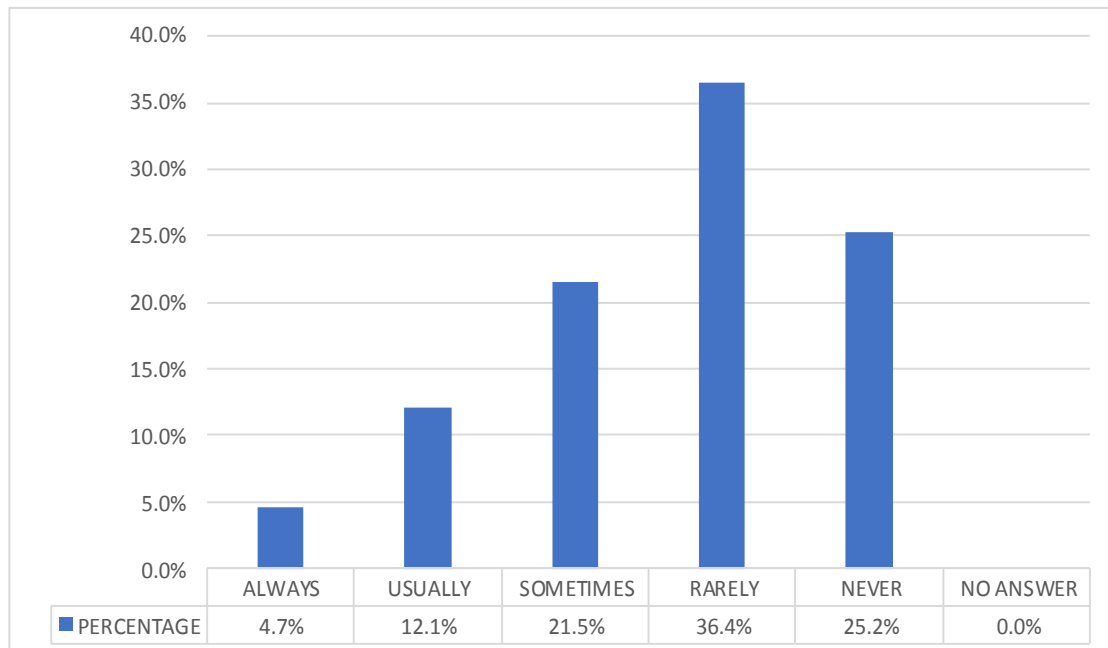
After analyzing the results, it can be said that the majority of students do not find interesting the texts, which are used to practice reading in class. This problem comes from the use of traditional texts. Those texts are not attractive for students and cannot be updated instantaneously, therefore, teachers should look for new text based on students' interest in order to make the reading activities pleasant and motivating. Authentic texts provide the opportunities to achieve these objectives since they can be selected and changed according to students' requirements.

Chart N° 5. Do you feel motivated when reading?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
3	ALWAYS	5	4,7%
	USUALLY	13	12,1%
	SOMETIMES	23	21,5%
	RARELY	39	36,4%
	NEVER	27	25,2%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.

Graph N° 3. Students' motivation when reading in English classes.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 3 refers to the level of students' motivation when performing reading activities in English classes.

In the item N° 3, the parameter rarely received the first place with a percentage of 36.4. Then the parameter never took the second place with 25.2%, followed by the parameter sometimes with a percentage of 21.5. The parameter usually attained 12.1%, and finally a small percentage chose the parameter always. It achieved 4.7%.

The results indicate that the majority of students do not feel motivated when reading in English. There are several reasons related to students' low motivation; the lack of communication between students and teachers about the objectives of each lesson, the use of texts that are not updated according to the students' requirements, and the use of strategies which are not effective when practicing reading in English classes are evidenced; therefore, teachers should



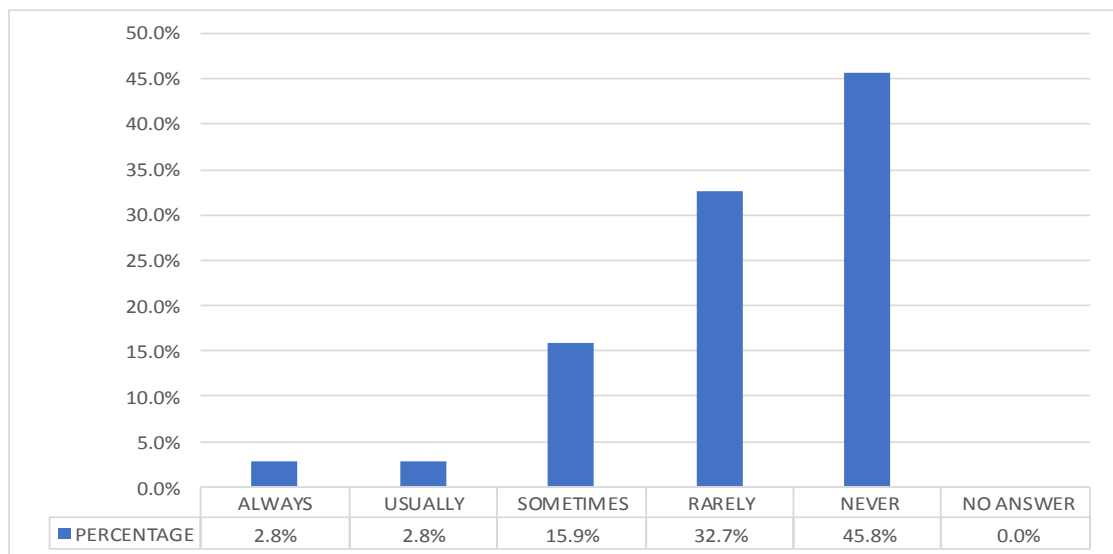
use new ways of performing reading activities in order to keep students' motivation in high levels.

Chart N° 6. Do you read authentic materials?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
4	ALWAYS	3	2,8%
	USUALLY	3	2,8%
	SOMETIMES	17	15,9%
	RARELY	35	32,7%
	NEVER	49	45,8%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.

Graph N° 4. The use of authentic materials in English classes.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 4 shows the frequency of authentic texts in English classes.

In the item N ° 4, the parameter never showed a percentage of 45.8, becoming the most selected. Then the parameter rarely achieved 32.7%. The parameter sometimes received a percentage of 15.9. Finally, the parameter usually and always attained a similar percentage of 2.8.



Taking into account these results, it can be said that authentic text are not used in English classes. This problem may be caused due to two factors: the first is related with the idea of authentic texts as difficult to prepare and time consuming, the second factor considers authentic texts as material for advanced students; therefore, teachers avoid this kind of material in English classes. However, it is recommended, by many researcher as described in the chapter two of this work, to use authentic texts frequently in English classes in order to improve students' motivation and interest in reading in English as well as to change students' feelings towards reading.

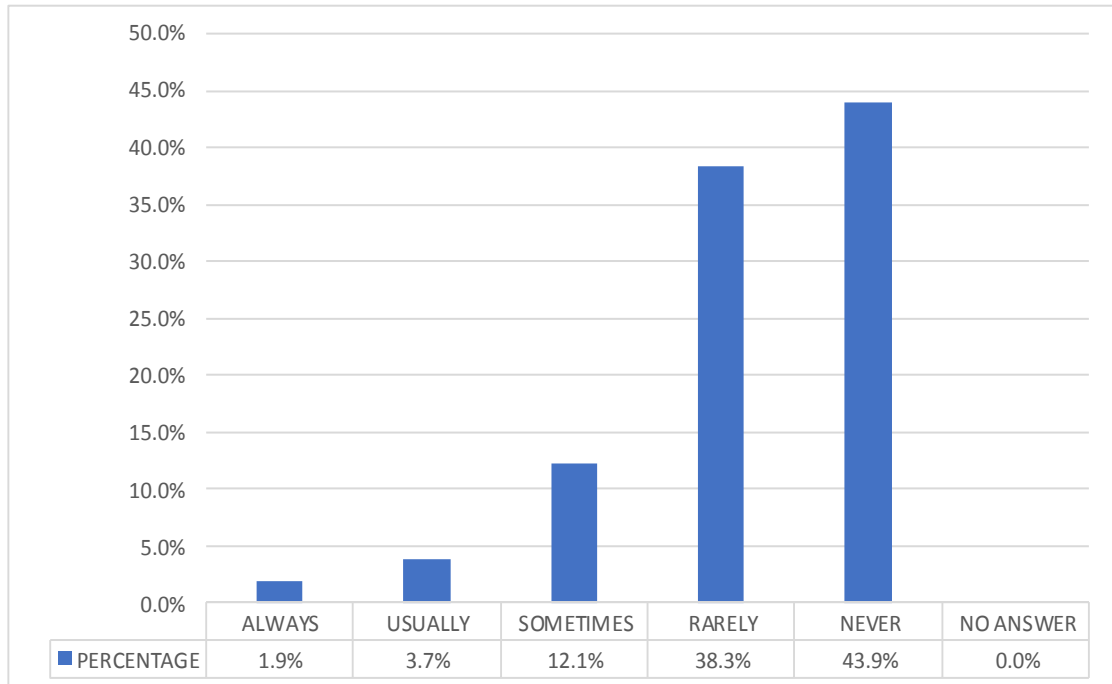
Chart N° 7. Do you do reading activities based on authentic materials?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
5	ALWAYS	2	1,9%
	USUALLY	4	3,7%
	SOMETIMES	13	12,1%
	RARELY	41	38,3%
	NEVER	47	43,9%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.



Graph N° 5. The use of reading activities based on authentic materials in English classes.



Source: *Carmona.*

The Item N° 5 refers to the frequency of activities based on authentic texts in English classes.

In the item N ° 5, the parameter never was the most selected with a percentage of 43.9. Then the parameter rarely took possession of 38.3%. The parameter sometimes attained a percentage of 12.1. Finally, the parameter usually and always received 3.7% and 1.9% respectively.

After analyzing the percentages, it can be said that reading activities based on authentic texts are not used commonly in English classes, adding more evidence and confirming the low use of authentic texts; thus, it is recommended to use authentic text and prepare reading activities based on



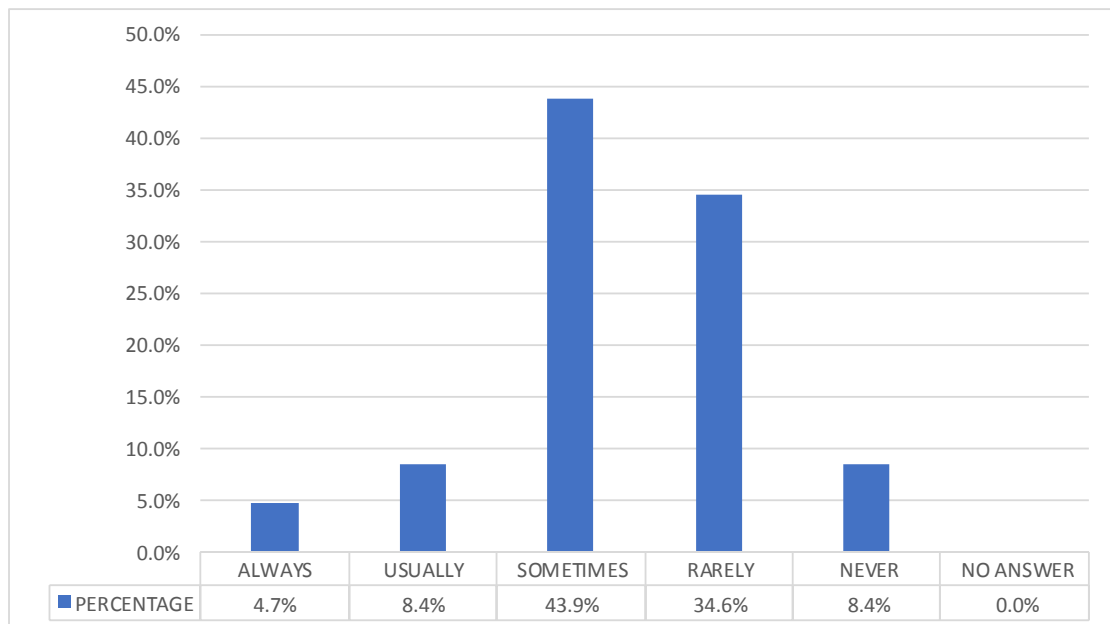
those texts in order to improve students' motivation and interest in reading in English as well as to change students' attitude towards reading.

Chart N° 8. Are you able to pronounce the sound of letters and words correctly when reading in English?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
6	ALWAYS	5	4,7%
	USUALLY	9	8,4%
	SOMETIMES	47	43,9%
	RARELY	37	34,6%
	NEVER	9	8,4%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: *Carmona.*

Graph N° 6. Students' ability to pronounce the sound of letters and words correctly when reading in English.



Source: *Carmona.*



The Item N° 6 refers to students' ability to pronounce the sound of letters and words correctly when reading in English.

In the item N ° 6, the parameter sometimes was the most selected by the sample with a percentage of 43.9. Then the parameter rarely grabbed 34.6%. The parameter never and usually gathered a similar percentage of 8.4. Finally, the parameter always received 4.7%.

After reading the percentages, it can be said that a great portion of the population cannot pronounce sound and words correctly when reading in English most of the time. The lack of motivation and students' interest in learning English, caused by unknown objectives and functionality of the English language in the real world, affect the development of students' reading basic skills. Thus, students should be exposed to reading-aloud exercises frequently, using appropriate methodology and texts in order to improve students' pronunciation, by modeling and giving them feedback while reading.

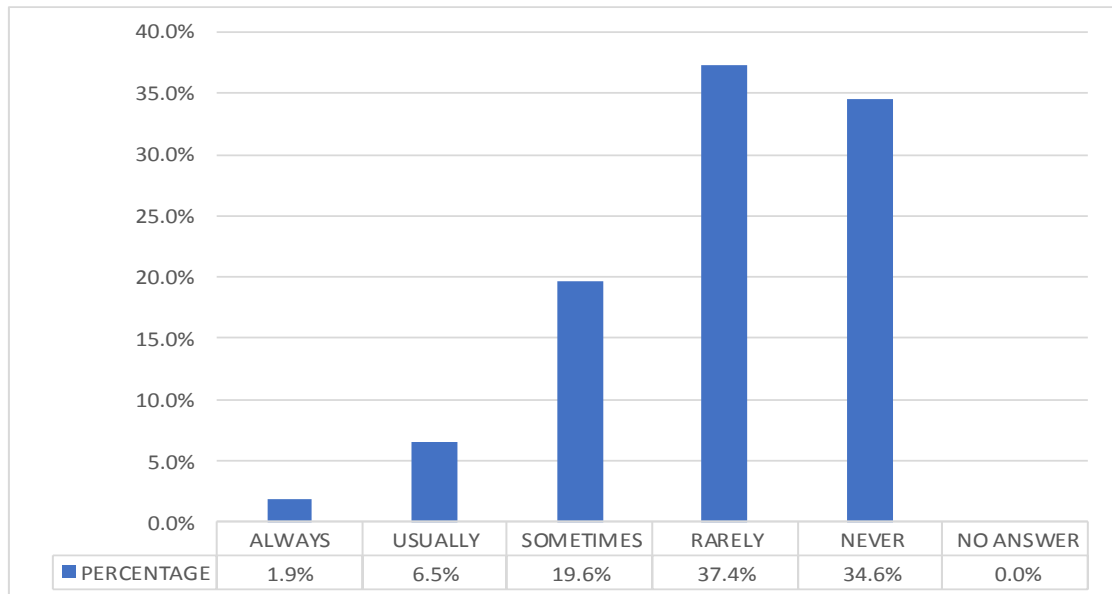
Chart N° 9. Are you able to read fluently in English?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
7	ALWAYS	2	1,9%
	USUALLY	7	6,5%
	SOMETIMES	21	19,6%
	RARELY	40	37,4%
	NEVER	37	34,6%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.



Graph N° 7. Students' ability to read fluently in English.



Source: *Carmona.*

The Item N° 7 refers to students' ability to read fluently when reading in English.

In the item N ° 7, the parameter rarely achieved the highest frequency with a percentage of 37.4. The parameter never amassed 34.6%. The parameter sometimes obtained a percentage of 19.6; moreover, 6.5% of students chose usually as their option, and, finally, the parameter always attained 1.9%.

The data indicate that students cannot read fluently in English. The lack of practice appears as the main issue when referring to fluency skill; therefore, students should practice this skill frequently in order to improve their basic skill of decoding as well as to improve their reading comprehension.

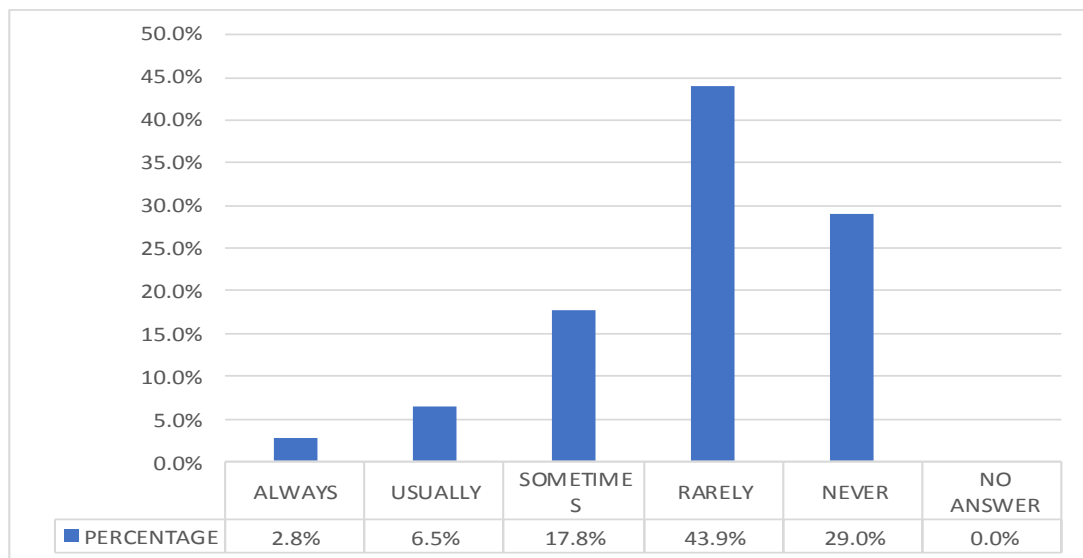


Chart N° 10. Are you able to see the difference between main ideas and supporting details when reading?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
8	ALWAYS	3	2,8%
	USUALLY	7	6,5%
	SOMETIMES	19	17,8%
	RARELY	47	43,9%
	NEVER	31	29,0%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.

Graph N° 8. Students' ability to see the difference between main ideas and supporting details when reading.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 8 refers to students' ability to see the difference between main ideas and supporting details.



In the item N° 8, the parameter rarely was the most selected by students with a percentage of 43.9. Then the parameter never was chosen by 29.0% of the population. The parameter sometimes appeared with a percentage of 17.8. Finally, 6.5% of students chose usually as their option, and the parameter always obtained 2.8%.

After taking into account the previous results, it can be said that students are not able to find the difference between main ideas and supporting details when reading. The lack of objectives when reading, the methodology used and the activities developed to accomplish during the lesson can be the main issues when teaching these skills; therefore, students should improve these skills needed to understand any text by creating reading activities focused specifically on this ability, introducing clear objectives at the beginning of any lesson, and the use of an appropriate methodology to achieve this goal.

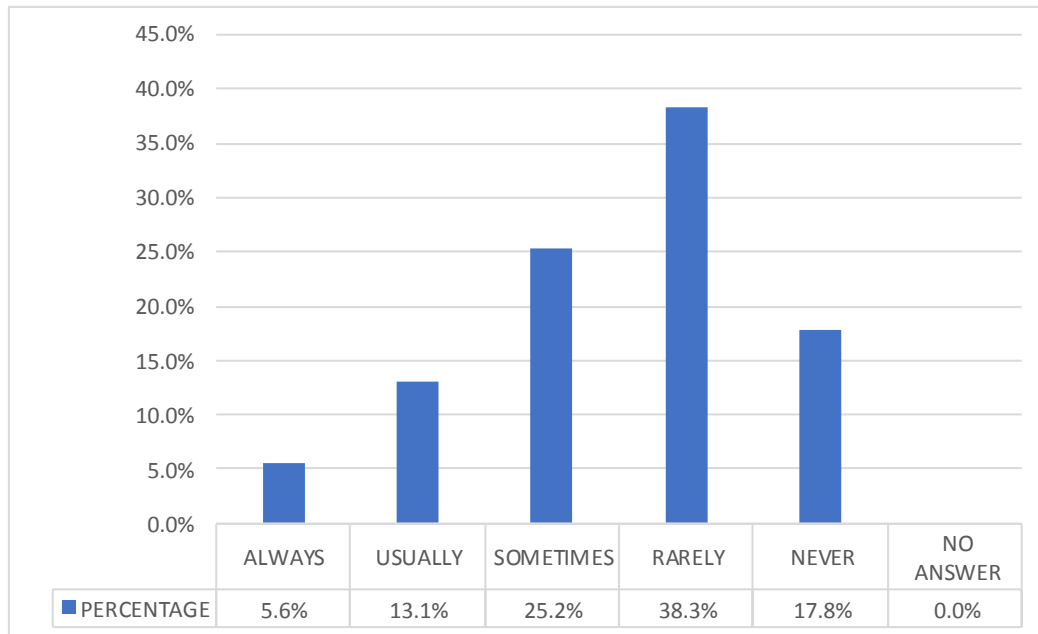
Chart N° 11. Are you able to remember and predict events when reading?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
9	ALWAYS	6	5,6%
	USUALLY	14	13,1%
	SOMETIMES	27	25,2%
	RARELY	41	38,3%
	NEVER	19	17,8%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.



Graph N° 9. Students' ability to remember and predict events when reading.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 9 refers to students' ability to recall events in order, thus, students are able to understand cause and effect when reading as well as to make inferences and draw conclusions, leading them to question a text all the time.

In the item N° 9, 38.3% of students chose the parameter rarely, thus, being the most selected. Then the parameter sometimes took possession of the second place with a percentage of 25.2. The parameter never attained a percentage of 17.8; moreover, 13.1% of students chose usually as their option, and the parameter always amassed 5.6%.



After analyzing the data, results show that the majority of students are not able to remember and predict events when reading, reducing the effectiveness of determining cause and effect, as well as students' ability to make inferences and draw conclusions while reading. These issues can be attributed to (as described in the previous item) the lack of reading objectives, appropriate methodology and activities; therefore, students should develop this skill needed to improve reading comprehension by introducing reading activities, methodology and reading objectives focused specifically on these skills.

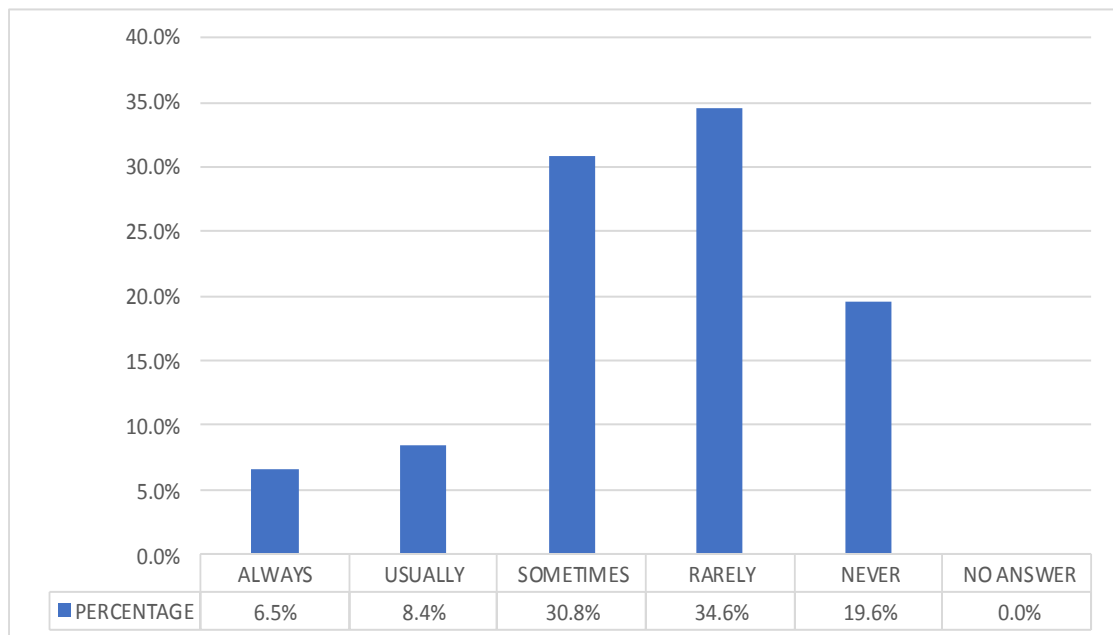
Chart N° 12. Are you able to understand authors' purpose and summarize their ideas when reading?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
10	ALWAYS	7	6,5%
	USUALLY	9	8,4%
	SOMETIMES	33	30,8%
	RARELY	37	34,6%
	NEVER	21	19,6%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.



Graph N° 10. Students' ability to understand authors' purpose and summarize their ideas when reading.



Source: *Carmona.*

The Item N° 10 refers to students' ability to find authors' purpose when reading as well as to summarize their ideas.

In the item N° 10, 34.6 % of students chose the parameter rarely, becoming the most selected. Then the parameter sometimes took a percentage of 30.8. The parameter never appeared with a percentage of 19.6. Finally, 8.4% of students chose usually as their option; thus, the parameter always obtained 6.5%.

Results say that the majority of the population are not able to understand authors' purpose and summarize their ideas when reading. The lack of using



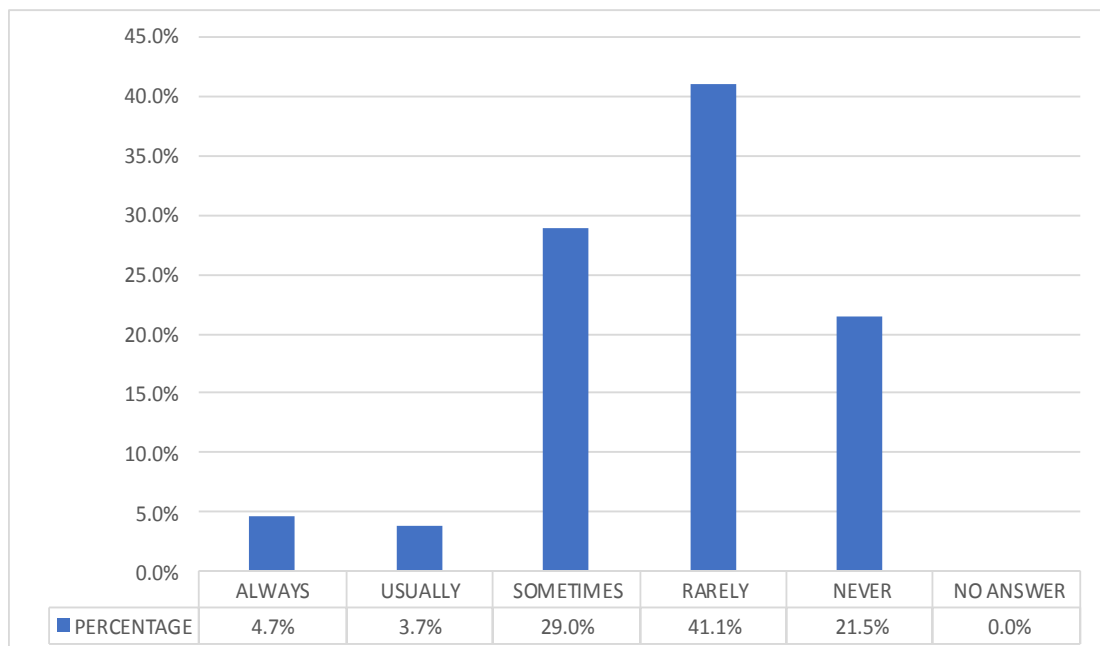
reading activities to develop these skills can be taking as the main issue in this item; therefore, these skills need to be improved by creating reading activities focalized on these aspects of reading comprehension.

Chart N° 13. Are you able to find similarities and differences between paragraphs, books, and authors when reading?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
11	ALWAYS	5	4,7%
	USUALLY	4	3,7%
	SOMETIMES	31	29,0%
	RARELY	44	41,1%
	NEVER	23	21,5%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: Carmona.

Graph N° 11. Students' ability to find similarities and differences between paragraphs, books, and authors when reading.



Source: Carmona.



The Item N° 11 refers to students' ability to compare and contrast ideas between texts.

In the item N° 11, the parameter rarely took possession of the first place with a percentage of 41.1, followed by the parameter sometimes with a percentage of 29.0. Then the parameter never appeared with a percentage of 21.5. Finally, the parameters usually and always amassed a percentage of 3.7 and 4.7 respectively.

After analyzing the percentages, results say that the majority of the population are not able to compare and contrast ideas between texts. The problem arises from the lack of implementing reading activities focused on the development of this skill, as well as the lack of setting reading objectives and the use of inadequate methodology; therefore, these skills should be taking into account in order to help students to improve their reading comprehension by creating opportunities to practice these skills while being in English classes.

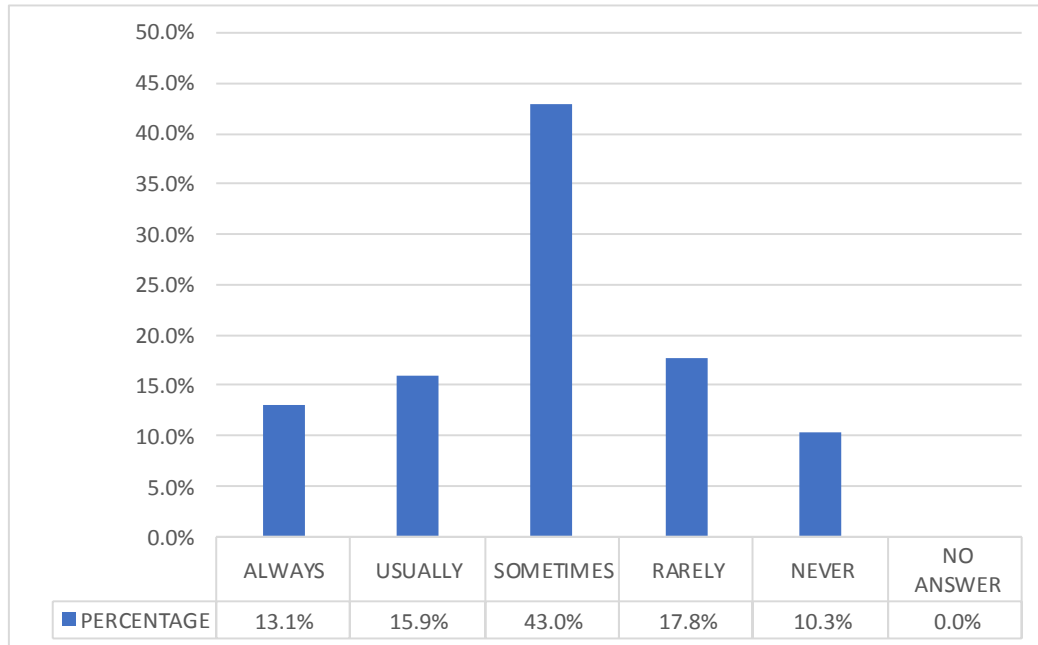
Chart N° 14. Are you able to understand the difference between fact and opinion when reading?

ITEM	PARAMETER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
12	ALWAYS	14	13,1%
	USUALLY	17	15,9%
	SOMETIMES	46	43,0%
	RARELY	19	17,8%
	NEVER	11	10,3%
	NO ANSWER	0	0,0%
	TOTAL	107	100,0%

Source: *Carmona.*



Graph N° 12. Students' ability understand the difference between fact and opinion when reading.



Source: Carmona.

The Item N° 12 refers to students' ability to distinguish between fact and opinion when reading.

In the item N ° 12, the parameter sometimes acquired a percentage of 43.0, followed by the parameter rarely with a percentage of 17.8. Then the parameter usually amassed a percentage of 15.9. Similarly, 13.1% of students chose as their option the parameter always. Finally, the parameters never obtained a percentage of 10.3.

Results indicates that students are able to distinguish between fact and opinion when reading half times they read. The issue arises from the lack of reading activities focused on this skill, as well as texts which do not provide the



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opportunity to develop this skill; therefore, these skills should be improved by creating specialized didactic material.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

The survey conducted at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” high school allowed the researcher to find out that the problem settled in the present work exists. The analysis of data confirmed the lack of reading skills in English students; thus students showed non-linguistic and linguistic issues in terms of reading skills. Moreover, the absence of authentic materials as didactic materials has been settled as the pattern; therefore, the need of a booklet to guide students and teachers to use authentic materials in EFL classes arises.

In terms of non-linguistic issues, it was found that students’ attitude toward reading in English has been affected. Students do not like reading in English when in classes due to the lack of motivation, appropriate methodology and didactic material used. Similarly, the majority of students do not find the texts used in English classes interesting since non-authentic texts cannot be updated and changed according to students’ needs and interest instantaneously, falling behind rapidly; therefore, traditional texts may affect students’ motivation and attitude about reading in English. Finally, it was revealed that students are not motivated when reading in English. The lack of using appropriate methodology and material, as well as reading activities appear as the main issues. The non-linguistic issues affect the development of students since they are essential skills for further learning, thus these problems need to be faced in order to encourage students to improve their basic reading skills, as well as their reading comprehension skills.



In terms of linguistic issues, students' basic reading skills need practice. According to the results obtained in the survey, percentages indicate that a great portion of the population have problems when making sounds and pronouncing words in English. Students do not employ enough effort and interest when practicing pronunciation due to the lack of motivation, caused by unknown reading objectives, reading material used, methodology employed as well as the lack of knowledge about the functionality of English language outside of the classroom. Similarly, students' fluency was another issue found. Students' lack of pronunciation affects their fluency as well as their motivation in reading, reducing the opportunities to learn new vocabulary.

Students' reading comprehension skills were analyzed during the survey. The results were mainly negative; thus, the didactic material used, the reading objectives and the reading activities introduced are not leading students to develop these skills; therefore, non-authentic texts may not be providing the opportunities to develop reading comprehension skills in students. The need to confront this situation is evident by applying appropriate material; needed to develop higher thinking in students. These texts combined with appropriate methodology, reading objectives and exercises could generate opportunities to develop these skills.

Apparently, authentic printed materials are not used frequently in EFL classes to develop reading skills. Results indicated the lack of authentic materials as didactic resources in EFL classes; thus affecting students' motivation as well as one of the main objectives of teaching English which is to enable students to use it in real world; therefore, non-authentic printed materials



are used commonly in EFL classes to improve reading skills, teaching them a pre-set scenario which in real text does not exist, reducing the effectiveness of English lessons.

In short, non-linguistic and linguistic issues have affected students' reading skills. The lack of motivation can be reflected in students' interest in reading as well as their attitude towards reading in English; thus students' basic reading skills and reading comprehension skills do not have enough support to encourage them to keep practicing and developing these skills. Knowing the advantages of Authentic texts as didactic materials in EFL classes, they can be considered as an option to face these problems; however, as mentioned before, those texts are not used commonly as reading resources in this particular institution; therefore, the researcher decided to write a booklet in order to introduce authentic texts as reading material in EFL classes in tenth grade at "Ángel Modesto Paredes" high school.

4.2 Recommendations

Authentic texts are not present in this particular institution in regular bases; thus, the benefits of using authentic materials as didactic material to improve students' reading skills must be used in this particular high school to face some of the problems found. Those problems, which include non-linguistic and linguistic issues, could be solved by implementing a booklet developed by the researcher in order to help students and teachers to start using authentic texts in their daily English classes.

Non-linguistic issues, which consider students' motivation and interest, as well as students' attitude towards reading could be affected positively by



implementing authentic materials in EFL classes. Authentic materials are proof that students need to see how the language is used outside of classrooms for real purpose, motivating them to read and learn about their favorite subjects; thus, authentic materials should be presented in an attractive way in order to encourage students to read, taking into account students' level, and interest as well as the objective of the unit. Additionally, when reading authentic printed materials, the objective is to extract meaning and not form. This is important in order to reduce students' stress when reading; moreover, reading in class provides opportunities to correct and model students' skills as well as providing immediate feedback, placing opportunities to correct pronunciation, fluency issues and reading comprehension.

Authentic materials provide a real scenario, where students feel they are learning something useful, improving their motivation and interest during the English lesson; thus, authentic materials can be used in combination with English course books to reinforce and expand students' learning; therefore, the selected material must suit the content and objectives of each unit, letting teachers move smoothly from non-authentic material to authentic printed materials.

Linguistic issues found in the survey could be solved by implementing new strategies and didactic materials. Authentic materials create opportunities to improve basic reading skills such as vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency since they find texts interesting which motivates them to read; thus, having students engaged in reading activities, teachers can implement methodologies and strategies in order to help students to achieve the goal of improving basic



reading skills; therefore, the reading material should be selected carefully in order to avoid stress during the reading task, as well as possible problems facing the material should be thought of in advance in order to take them into consideration while creating the lesson plan.

Reading comprehension skills play an important role while being a student as well as in life. This linguistic issue is difficult to confront due to the fact they require a series of skills in order to extract meaning from a text; thus, authentic materials provide opportunities to exercise those skills since they have content and context which tries to communicate a situation, a learning, an experience, etc.; therefore, using authentic material to foster reading allows to create lesson plans focused on different reading comprehension skills using the same text. Teachers have to adapt and change the text according to students' needs in order to facilitate the development of each activity; having in mind what skill they want to develop.

Authentic materials are not used commonly at "Ángel Modesto Paredes" high school; therefore, the need to create a booklet to introduce authentic material in the classroom is evidenced. The booklet developed by the researcher should be used to face the problems found in the present investigation. It was created based on all the information showed in this research and pretends to help teachers to simplify the introduction of authentic texts in EFL classes; moreover, the booklet took the reference of the requirements of the national curriculum and course book used by public institutions in the tenth grade of basic education; therefore, teachers can move smoothly from the regular content to the booklet. The booklet can be used as a



guide to create didactic materials based on authentic materials to develop reading skills; thus teachers can use and adapt texts according to their needs.

The booklet developed by the researcher was based in the investigation carried out during the development of this work; moreover, the researcher took into consideration some of the recommendations found in previous works; however, the booklet was not used on students in order to see its effectiveness; therefore, for further investigation, the booklet could be tested in order to discover its effectiveness when facing the problems discussed in this research.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire



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Facultad de Filosofía, Letras y Ciencias de la Educación

Escuela de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

Survey No. 1

Survey applied to English students attending the tenth grade of Basic Education at “Ángel Modesto Paredes” High School.

Instructions: Dear student,

I cordially request you to respond to this questionnaire, which seeks for information about authentic teaching resources on developing English reading skills.

Mark **X** to the answer of your choice, corresponding to the column number that best reflects your criteria, taking into account the following qualitative and quantitative parameters:

5=A (Always)

4=U (Usually)

3=S (Sometimes)

2=R (Rarely)

1=N (Never)

Check your questionnaire before submission.



The survey is anonymous

Objective: To gather information about the use of Authentic Materials (magazine articles, newspaper articles, movie advertisements, astrology columns, sports reports, obituary columns, advice columns, lyrics to songs, restaurant menus, street signs, cereal boxes, candy wrappers, tourist information brochures, university catalogs, telephone books, maps, TV guides, comic books, greeting cards, grocery coupons, pins with messages, schedules) in English classes to foster reading skills among students attending the tenth grade of Basic Education.

Researcher: Marco Carmona

QUESTIONNAIRE

			Parameters				
		Qualitative scale	A	U	S	R	N
N	Question	Quantitative scale	5	4	3	2	1
	When taking English classes:						
1	Do you like reading in English?						
2	Do you read interesting topics?						
3	Do you feel motivated when reading?						
4	Do you read authentic materials?						
5	Do you do reading activities based on authentic materials?						
6	Are you able to pronounce the sound of letters and words correctly when reading in English?						
7	Are you able to read fluently in English?						
8	Are you able to see the difference between main ideas and supporting details when reading?						
9	Are you able to remember and predict events when reading?						



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10	Are you able to understand authors' purpose and summarize their ideas when reading?					
11	Are you able to find similarities and differences between paragraphs, books, and authors when reading?					
12	Are you able to understand the difference between fact and opinion when reading?					

Thank you for you cooperation



Appendix 2. Students' pictures

Students' pictures filling the questionnaires.







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Appendix 3. Pilot test results

	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten	Eleven	Twelve	va
1	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	
2	3	3	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	
3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	
4	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	
5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	
6	1	3	4	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	
7	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	4	3	5	3	1	
8	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	4	4	2	3	
9	4	4	5	3	3	4	3	3	5	3	2	2	
10	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	
11	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	
12	4	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	
13	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	
14	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	
15	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	
16	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	
17													
40													

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	16	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	16	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
,875	12

Source: Carmona.